

There is a touch of mystical pantheism about John Cowper Powys' writings. Utterly un-English in the accepted sense, he belongs to the international world of art. He is a feeler more than a thinker—a quality which is universally appealing. As a critic he is acute and understanding.

Here in this book he sets out to show that it is the business of the individual to take his life in his own hands and get whatever happiness he can from it. It is a task which needs initiative. Instead of depending on your fate and the providential strokes of good luck that might befall you occasionally, you should be happy with *life itself*.

Powys was a most remarkable lecturer and much of his work, especially his non-fiction, reads like a published lecture.

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THE ART OF HAPPINESS

JOHN COWPER POWYS



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The Art of Happiness

Try to substitute any other *summum bonum* for this one, and you will see how many difficulties you get into! What religious person for instance would make the aim of life the process of knowing God, and becoming one with God, if this conscious harmony with the spirit underlying the system of things did not imply personal happiness?

And it would seem a weird and unnatural thing for a man to pursue what is called 'Truth', either by strictly scientific, or by the more imaginative philosophical method if this pursuit were not in itself attended by happiness or at least presumed to result in happiness. Art the same thing applies to that mysterious relation between what is half-created by the mind and what is half-discovered in Nature, which we call Beauty. If artists and poets and story-tellers and their audiences didn't find happiness in this particular human activity, it would surely never have become the mighty urge that it has become.

And what applies to Truth and Beauty applies to what we have come to call Goodness too. If to be good didn't mean both to be happy and to be a cause of happiness, there surely could never have arisen in the world this great 'stream of tendency making for righteousness' such as we cannot help—for all our reversions to barbarity—being aware of in ourselves and in history.

And the same thing holds in the matter of practical work. It is all very well for Carlyle to harp upon work as against happiness, as the purpose of life. But we are men; we are not machines. It is not work *in itself*, more than it is God in Himself, or truth in itself, or beauty in itself, that keeps us going. It is the happiness that we get from work, or give by work, either immediately or in the long run, that drives us forward.

There does seem to be a widespread notion, however, that although in reality all these great 'purposes' of God, Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Work, are precious

because they alone, in the long run, bring us happiness, we can only obtain this happiness, or create this happiness, by treating these things *as ends in themselves* and by letting the happiness they bring, their *by-product*, come and go as it will.

But is not this attitude of mind, when you really analyse it, a pathological superstition? Does not its prevalence prove, not the sacredness of God, Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Work, but the sacredness of the feeling of happiness, a feeling so precious, so rare, so sacred in fact that we all are secretly afraid—as the ancients were in regard to those Avenging Deities that they called the Eumenides—to so much as name in our hearts what we know to be the feeling that really keeps us going and keeps the world going.

This work is therefore an experiment, an experiment for both writer and reader, to see what effect it has upon the mind if we habitually destroy this happiness-taboo and aim at building up for ourselves—and incidentally for others—a premeditated system or art of personal happiness out of the various orderly and disorderly elements that the fatality of our character and the accidents of our environment and our experience offer as our destined and chance-given material.

The only axiom I must beg the reader to accept at the start—even if he be rationally committed to some system of fatalism or determinism—is the basic axiom that our thoughts at least are more or less under our control.

This is really the root of the matter. If you refuse to allow that the human mind has any control over its thoughts I cannot see what good you can possibly get—except the satisfaction of studying a fellow-dupe's illusions—from a book of this kind. It must appear to you mere pretentious gabble. But if you grant this *one single* axiom, that the mind has at least a partial control over its thoughts, I think I can deduce, though with no exact or mathematical inevitableness, but still with a measure of convincence a good many important conclusions.

Granting, first of all, then, that the mind has some control over its thoughts, let us for a moment examine the nature of this control.

What do we mean by the controlling 'mind' and what do we mean by the controlled 'thoughts'?

At this point it is necessary—in spite of the technical objections that professional psychologists will raise—to use the old simple natural human words for those natural if not simple, movements of the mind, feelings of the ego and conscious sensations of the inner self which accompany all mental acts.

The 'mind' is *the self when it thinks to itself*; and its 'thoughts' are *what it thinks*. The self, as a mind thinking, has the power of detaching itself from all its bodily feelings and sensations. It can even detach itself from its consciousness of itself as a mind with certain particular thoughts. I mean that it can—and I think this is a universal human experience—stand, so to speak, *beside itself*, and say to itself, 'That is you, you old Identity, thinking the same troublesome worrying thoughts as usual.'

The more we consider this matter of the mind's control—of even its partial control—over its thoughts, the more we are compelled to recognize that these thoughts are intimately associated with the fact of our being happy or unhappy. Thoughts have the power of making us feel happy even while our body is suffering; and as we all know they very often have the power of making us profoundly unhappy when our body is completely at ease and even enjoying pleasant sensations.

My own mind dwells so constantly on the verge of certain terrible manias that it can speak with peculiar authority upon a pathological subject like this.

What I want to make clear is simple enough. When we talk of 'the mind controlling its thoughts' what we are especially thinking of is the mind's power of ma-

us feel happy by calling up certain thoughts while it dismisses certain other thoughts.

Most of us, I suppose, even if we are what are called 'healthy-minded', have some peculiar dreads, apprehensions, fears, loathings, horrors, to dwell upon which is extremely painful to us and to forget which is a heavenly relief. I doubt whether we can prevent these thoughts' first appearances, but the mind has the power of either dwelling on them or of forcing itself to forget them; and what I myself have discovered, from examining the behaviour of my own mind, is that there is a cruel demon hidden in it that derives sadistic pleasure from trying to force me to think of the very things that especially make me shudder. And the happier I feel—and the pleasanter, in other respects, the moment is—the more energetically does this demon under my own helmet call to my attention what I particularly loathe to think about.

Whether there is such a thing as a 'faculty' of the mind exactly corresponding to what we popularly mean by the word 'will' does not affect what I am saying. It is fashionable nowadays to dislike the idea of 'faculties of the mind' and it is also fashionable nowadays to especially dislike the notion of a mental activity called 'the use of the will' but it surely remains that there is some movement of our deepest self, some psychic experience common to us which, whether you call it by the word 'will' or by some other name, is an important aspect of all human psychology.

What I mean is that there is something in the actual working of our minds, which, if you are too pedantic to call it by the popular monosyllable 'will', you will have to designate by *some* word when you wish to express a universal subjective feeling that we all have whether it be an illusion or not.

But at this point it is necessary for me to use a word still more unfashionable than the word 'will' and with even a worse odour of archaic superstition—I refer to the word 'faith'. For as a matter of fact what you really ex-

But what kind of a thing is this 'happiness' we are considering? That is the next matter to be discussed. We all know roughly what the words Happiness and Unhappiness mean, but like all human names for important reactions to life they seem to indicate states of feeling that quickly tend to blend with, and lose themselves in, other states of feeling, for which there have been found, by the selective instinct of our particular tribe, quite different names.

Joy, ecstasy, rapture, delight, satisfaction, enchantment, peace, contentment, enjoyment, blessedness, pleasure—all these indicate conditions of human feeling that cannot be rigidly separated off from what we call Happiness. Pleasure, I suppose, comes on the whole nearest to it in our ordinary speech and the antithesis Pleasure—Pain corresponds roughly, in most of our minds, with the antithesis Happiness—Unhappiness.

Pain, however, though applicable as we all know to mental suffering, strictly belongs to the physical side of things, while even *Pleasure*, the other member of this great rival antithesis, though less consistently than *Pain*, has like it a physical implication.

There is always a considerable margin, a sort of obscure twilight-nimbus, left vague and indetermined around every great human word, as it descends the stream of the generations, and certain important nuances of meaning are constantly being added, while others are being taken away, without the possibility of any individual mind in one lifetime catching the drift of the change.

Personally I like the sound of the word 'pleasure' a good deal better than the sound of the word 'happiness'. There seems to me something at once more fluid and more organic about it; while the word 'pain' is certainly more expressive than the word 'unhappiness'. The syllables 'happy' have something jaunty about them, something brisk and bouncing. They suggest an element less dignified, less poetical, than the ~~psychic overtones con-~~veyed in the syllables 'pleasure'. Take for instance the

characteristic line of Wordsworth's: 'The pleasure which there is in life itself,' and substitute the word 'happiness'. It would not be only the scansion of the verse that would be broken. There would be a loss of some deep organic quality in the meaning.

Nevertheless, in spite of the annoying jauntiness, and even the bouncing babyishness, of the word 'happy', it is hard to see how it can be avoided. What it possesses, that the more poetical word 'pleasure' lacks, is an overtone of mental volition. You can will to be happy—you cannot evoke the mystery of pleasure by any willing.

It seems indeed as though happiness might be considered as the subjective counterpart to pleasure. I mean that while it would be natural to say: 'Be happy or die!' there would be something strained, something even violent, about the expression: 'Get pleasure or die!' The more you concentrate on the difference between these words the more clearly does it appear that while pleasure is something that comes to you from outside, happiness is something that, though it may often be 'roused to reciprocity' by pleasure, is intrinsically a mental, or even a moral state. You could also, I think, maintain without contradiction that there is an implication of lastingness about happiness, whereas the idea of pleasure suggests something not only more physical but much more transitory.

Having thus dealt with the meaning of our word I want now to dig down if I can to the basic root-psychology of the feeling, or sensation, or emotion which the word conveys.

I think we find, as with most things in the world, an unmistakable duality in the nature of happiness itself, quite irrespective of its basic opposition to its antagonist in the happy—unhappy antithesis. The thing can be a passive state or it can be an active state. At its best in its passive condition it gives you the feeling of a certain lying back in delicious receptivity upon the life-stream whose waves rock you and whose flood bears you up.

At its best in its active state it gives you the feeling of a vibrant energy, of a strong, tense self-creation, a feeling full of the glow of battle and of the exultation of wrestling with a formidable opponent.

Now since there exists this basic difference between the passive feeling of happiness, when a person lies back upon life, and the active feeling, when he wrestles with life, the crucial question arises, upon which of these two moods—granting, as in practical life we have to grant, that what we call our ‘will’ represents a vital mental process in our living organism—is it better to concentrate? I mean if we do really have power over our thought-processes, is it wiser to aim at the active state of happiness, or at the passive? I would say most strongly in answer to this that the wise course is to aim for both. Nor can they altogether be separated; for both require *some* measure of deliberate effort. The tense, the strung-up, the creative side of the feeling of happiness is not completely absent, at least at the start, from the other mood. For the yielded, passive, relaxed, abandoned state, though it does fall to the lot of certain people to enjoy it by pure good luck, can be made much more continuous by intensifying what we may possess of the tense, alert, self-conscious, and ‘gathered-up’, attitude.

We are all familiar with the expression, ‘Pull yourself together.’ Well! that expression, better than any other, describes the psychological movement by which in our deepest soul we put on, as Homer would say, ‘our harness,’ and wrestle with the world.

But the point is that the relaxed and passive kind of happiness, when you float on the ocean of the ~~amoral~~ cosmos and allow its magical currents to flow ~~through~~ you, is a kind of happiness that can be reached ~~casually~~ and enjoyed deliberately when once you have acquired the trick of ‘pulling yourself together’.

Such magical, abandoned moods *do* come—it *would* be absurd to deny it—to the most casual, the *most natural*.

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most unconscious people; but they come to the conscious, philosophical ones—it is certainly safe to say that such—in proportion as these latter clear the way the more intensely and the more craftily for their reception.

The truth is that when once we have arrived, as so many of us have, at a point where we cannot escape being conscious of every flicker of our sensuous and mental life, it is ridiculous to tell us to be natural and simple and unaffected without allowing us the right, or even the possibility, of consciously struggling after this simplicity, this naturalness, this unaffectedness. The clue to the whole life-history of the human mind from the beginning until this day lies in those threefold spiral curves, so beautifully indicated by Hegel, wherein we begin with the religious simplicity of children, advance to the cynical rationalism of youth, and then return—only with a difference—to the old childish wonder, in our mellowest and most inspired maturity.

But granting that we have a right to make a cult of personal happiness and to make as simple a cult and as childish a cult of it as we please, the point arises, how is it that among all the other ideals put forward at the great historic epochs of the world for the human race to follow, the cult of personal happiness hardly appears at all?

What are the reasons why so few human beings deliberately, even to themselves, make their personal happiness their main purpose of their lives? Is it all due to that curious taboo on the matter about which I have already spoken? I think another cause of it is that there is a great evolutionary pressure focussed just now upon the human race. The lower animals have slipped aside from this terrible pressure. They have stereotyped themselves into a happy stagnation; and even the plants save when meddled with by man, have fallen into peaceful recurrence of what is outside the fearful intensity of evolution.

But luckless man—made to be a pot for the creative fire by the mysterious master-force—feels driving, burning, scorching, fermenting, seething through him the same dreadful urge to self-lacerating progress which at the beginning forced our ancestors out of their sprawlings and stretchings and baskings into the tyranny of mind.

It is, I think, this terrific evolutionary pressure springing out of the power behind Nature, rather than any superstitious guilt-sense derived from the sin-rituals of savage antiquity, that mainly accounts for the fact that among all our historic moral systems there is no widespread or profoundly influential cult advocating personal happiness as the chief purpose of human life. The Epicurean philosophy itself was, it seems in reality, not *quite* this; and as for the doctrines of Aristippus, which do seem to have amounted to this, they can have been scarcely known beyond an Athenian circle of progressive minds and beyond the ardent youth of a few Ionian Islands.

In China no doubt, in Arabia Felix, and in Persia such a theory found its advocates, but I question whether among the metaphysical intellects of India it ever gained much hearing.

The modern Western tendency, both among Communists and Fascists, is so furiously social that all types of individualistic thought are under a ban, tarred with the invidious brush of bourgeois liberalism.

And yet when you 'come down to brass tacks' there surely must arise, every day of their devoted lives, in these young people—for these violent Western ideals seem especially to answer the needs of generous youth—moments when they feel that in this one single terrestrial experience of a living soul, 'between two eternities,' it is a queer thing to be thinking of nothing but the material well-being of future generations.

What I am trying to suggest here is that a stoical resolve to endure life happily, without abating a jot of the gathering-up of the resources of our spirit, is not an unworthy human ideal.

terrible beauty once transformed our life. No human soul is really satisfied through all of its being by an existence devoted to what is called the 'Service of Humanity', still less by the Service of the State. It demands more than these things; and to bind it down to these things is to prepare for terrible and insane reversions to lost idolatries.

Driven as we are by the urge of economic necessity, hemmed in as we are by the fatality of our material environment, there is a margin in all our lives when, whether we like it or not, our thoughts and emotions wander from the matter in hand, and our imagination finds itself confronted by mysteries beyond the improvement of any human society.

Futile as it may be to fancy we can discover in life, or invent for life, any universal 'purpose' or underlying 'meaning', there yet remains something in us—call it by what name you will—that relucts at subsiding into the rôle of patient labourers for the good of posterity. Eliminate all superstition, all 'other worldliness', all sense of 'sin', be as sceptical as you please about God and Immortality, there still exists, in the most regimented and docile ego, an intellectual restlessness, a stirring of the imagination, a troubling of the waters, a terrible and dangerous questioning that cannot be allayed by any national or even by any international preoccupation.

The soul within us is a microcosm, not a micropolis; and is born for the happiness that flows from a cosmic, not a political or economic life. There is a craving in us, felt by men and women of every colour and every race, that neither the passion for communal improvement nor the passion for communal applause can distract from its organic unrest.

We are men; and it is the destiny of men to detach themselves from the universe in order to enjoy the universe. Action, however exciting, labour, however absorbing, penury, however exacting, love and hate, however obsessing, leave a yawning gap in the circumference

hunger, extreme pain, are things that can bring down all but the sublimest characters. So also, if you care greatly for another living person, that person's prostration under these extreme evils will probably break you down.

But the point is that there always remains the hope that these intolerable evils will pass. Many and many a suicide would be alive still if he could only have waited till some particular accumulation of evils had passed, as everything does pass in the casuality of time.

But even if there were more unbearable pain in the world than there is, *that* were no reason for rejecting these magical sensations or for refusing to struggle after them.

The evolutionary force in the universe having once issued in personality, nothing short of such moods, some attitudes, such exultations in our personal life is worthy of our cosmic origin.

It is indeed likely enough, in spite of the modern tendency to lay all the stress upon the material world, that the highest part of our personality is already in touch, *is already part of*, a higher dimension of life than is supplied by the phenomena of the astronomical universe.

Metaphysicians tend to speak of this higher level of our identity as something impersonal; but they are just as likely to be wrong as to be right in this misanthropic assertion. It may well be, on the contrary, that this 'higher', or 'deeper', or more 'comprehensive' aspect of our ego is the most intensely personal thing about us! The sublime and startling dogma of the Catholic Church in the matter of the Incarnation *may* be representative of a tremendous cosmic secret.

But whether this is so or not, whether there be or not a level of life outside the phenomenal world to which the apex, so to speak, of our living organism pierces its way, what I want to insist upon now is that the effort we make to gather our forces together 'to be happy or die' is an effort not only able to satisfy that restless soul within us which remains unsatisfied by benevolence and righteousness, but is an effort that automatically forces

intelligence, seems now to be concerned with the development of personality, man remains historically and practically a creature dependent on others, nourished by others, attracted and repelled by others, and under the dominance of the economic customs of the place of his birth.

The arena of our struggle is therefore complicated for most of us by being composed of not only natural elements but of very touchy and very jumpy human beings.

Interrupting the direct contact of our individual soul with the cosmos, we have to cope with a number of neighbour-souls who are also struggling to realize their identities under the impact of our common environment.

It is in the blending of our relations with our neighbours and with the universe, or, to use the old language, with 'Man' and with 'God', that the quality of our egoism becomes apparent. You can have the egoism of a seagull or the egoism of a hedgehog and be justified in both; whereas there is a certain kind of selfishness that leaves your personality withered, colourless, sapless, and neutral, just as there is a certain kind of unselfishness that produces these disagreeable effects. To be a supremely successful egoist it is necessary to combine a devilish cunning with a sublime unscrupulousness and both these things with the detachment of a saint, but fortunately Nature is more merciful as well as more cruel than most philosophers upon happiness realize, and without aspiring to attain this extreme mixture of Machiavellism and Spinozism a person may pick up a good number of windfalls of the most subtle happiness every day of his life if he will follow a few of the ancient ritual-tricks, in this art, that I am now fumbling to express.

I have called this first chapter 'The Root of the Matter' and I want to reveal now, without more ado, what I have found in my own experience to be the best ritual-trick or habitual motion of the mind, wherewith not only to bear up against the pressure of external evils, or against that 'whoreson lethargy' in a person's soul which comes both from mental weariness and bodily weakness, but

upon this spirit in us that, when we do, it seems like the aid of a supernatural presence.

There come moments, however, when this self-evoked leap of resistance is impossible for us because of our weakness and our melancholy; and for such occasions, while I am touching upon this 'Root of the Matter', I want to hint at a different and less violent spiritual procedure. For this also I have a presumptuous and arbitrary name—I call it the act of 'De-carnation'. Just as by Incarnation we mean the mystic fusion of the spirit with the flesh, so by 'de-carnation' I mean the separation of the spirit in us *from* our flesh.

The act of 'de-carnation' is a much easier one than what I call the 'Ichthian' act. It consists in thinking of your soul as something separate from your body, something that exists in the air—that free air into which the Ichthian leap carries your whole identity—by the side of your oppressed and persecuted body.

Within this soul, thus separated from your body—and the play of imagination required for this mental act is an old and very simple one, known in some degree to us all—dwells now the main part of your consciousness; and from this vantage-point it surveys and overlooks your persecuted and weighed-down body.

In no circumstance does this act of 'de-carnation' help you more completely than when, confronted by some other person who is being a trial to you, you are tempted to pit your egoism, your desire for happiness at his or her expense, against the similar desire in this trying person. But when, hovering in the free air apart from both the self-asserting ones, you envisage yourself and this other as if you were a third person at the encounter, you are in a position to experience an extraordinary liberation of spirit and a curiously indulgent attitude, both towards the troublesome intruder on your peace and towards your own agitated and egoistic organism. You are aloof from both, and, as it were, watching both from your airy vantage-ground. Your soul is still *the centre of your aware-*

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but no longer the centre of your touchy animal
ity.

s contrasted with this temporary 'de-carnation' what
n trying to indicate by what I call the 'Ichthian' act
a resolute motion of subjective energy within the ego
means of which our spirit rises up from the depths
our being and shaking off both physical lethargy and
ental discomfort plunges into the mystery of life, con
sidered as one great stream, and into the mystery of death,
onsidered as a positive element surrounding it.

In either case the soul's existence, as Heraclitus says,
is a state of war, war down to the roots of things; but
you can either fight this abysmal battle by the act of
aloofness which I have indicated in the word 'de-carna-
tion', or by the act of intense integration to which I have
given the name 'Ichthian'.

The truth is we submit far too much and far too humbly
to the pressure of the daily miseries implied in our ordi-
nary life. When not ourselves in extreme pain, when not
sharing by the sympathy of our nerves the extreme pain
of another, who is there shall dare to put limits to what
the human mind, fortified by a practised will, can achieve
in the evoking of happiness and peace?

We stand indeed between two extremes. On the one
hand we can pursue what is popularly called 'pleasure',
grossly, heedlessly, selfishly, at the expense of all finer
considerations. On the other hand we can let our per-
sonal life go and give ourselves up to some absorbing
Cause which becomes more to us than soul or body.

Neither of these is the way suggested in this book; for
the clutching at external pleasure puts the spirit with
us and the happiness within us at the mercy of accident
while the heroic sacrificing of our personal life on
altar of a cause that may or may not benefit future ge-
nerations leaves the great evolutionary tide that has cu-
minated in our life, thwarted, perverted, dissipated, squan-
dered, offered up to a future that after all may never
moulded according to our ideal.

In laying stress upon the gathering together of the forces of the soul in this 'fish-like' leap of primordial desperation I feel I am describing a universal psychological experience. Where it is not recognized as such, I would say that the person in question is in some way sub-normal, sub-vital, sub-magnetic.

I call it 'the Ichthian act' because I want to suggest by the analogy of the fish leaping into the air out of the water an act of the soul that is the most comprehensive act the soul can make, an act that includes not only an embrace of the mystery of life, but an embrace of the mystery of death, considered as something positive. The "*ichthis*" or fish swimming in the water is like our soul in its practical absorption in the diurnal routine of its existence; but when it leaps into the air to fall back again with that familiar sound which is one of the most poetical sounds in Nature, it leaves for the moment its proper element and invades a super-element, an element which might well be compared with the *other-dimensional* mystery which surrounds our mortal existence. The leaping fish does in fact—for the air into which it leaps would be its death if it couldn't sink back into water—represent the soul embracing both life and death in a moment of predetermined intensity. Montaigne seems to imply that all wise men meditate on the *nothingness* of death and thus escape the fear of it. Goethe seems anxious on the contrary to have us put the thought of death completely out of our minds. Neither of these methods of dealing with this circumference of our life seems to me satisfactory. Montaigne's brooding on it and reiterated self-assurances about it come at last to resemble the uneasy fidgetings of a life-worshipper confronted with his grand antagonist, whereas Goethe's habitual way of shying off the whole subject, as for instance, in that 'Think of Living' written over Mignon's tomb, seems no more than a child-like turning from the dark.

The best way to take death as far as I can see is not to avoid all thought of it, though there is more to be said

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that method than for brooding on its annihilating
ations, but to think of it in some *positive* way, as
essing, equally with life, some tremendous withheld
ret.

This way of thinking of it need not be very distinct—
obviously cannot be, where we are in such absolute
ignorance—but it *can* be positive and it can be hopeful.
We have an equal right, as far as the 'truth' of this dark
matter goes, to be hopeful as to be despairing, for our
gnorance is complete; but since there is really a half-
chance that the mind's attitude counts for something—
I mean that a life-long concentration on the idea of sur-
viving death might be an element in our surviving it—
it does not seem the part of wisdom to brood obstinately
and dogmatically upon annihilation; unless annihilation,
as may easily happen, is *what you want*.

The wisest course it seems to me, since no one can
deny that both these issues, survival and annihilation,
are equally possible, is to combine them in some vague
way, and formulate in your mind an imaginative concep-
tion of death, or even an imaginative image of death,
that shall allow for the feeling of annihilation, of *some-*
thing annihilated, as well as for the feeling of survival,
of *something* surviving.

This cannot be so very hard to do, since both annihila-
tion and survival are matters of daily experience in
regard to other things than ourselves. Each of my
abysmal motions of the soul when it finds itself 'up-
against it', this Ichthian act and this de-carnating ac-

have something in them of both living and dying.
When certain vigorous people die—and our best tra-
actors are aware of this—there is a spasm, a convulsi-
a magnetic shock, a shudder, like that of a tense-dra-
bow-string let go; and although my 'Ichthian' act by w-
we plunge into a life-and-death exultation is not so s-
modie or so convulsed as this, there is the same 'inbr-
ing' and 'outbreathing', the same pressing down
spring, the same releasing of a string, the same p-

from element into element, the same intensification of identity and dispersing of identity.

And just as this particular human gesture—so general as to be practically universal—has something in common with a fish's leap into the air, so it has something in common with culmination of the erotic act. There is the same complete shaking off of all ordinary pre-occupation, the same complete abandonment to a supersensation, the same half-creation and half-discovery of a cosmic focus-point.

It does not need any catastrophic calamity, any overwhelming tragedy, to drive us poor mortals to desperation. You have to be an unusually well-constituted person to be able to get through a single day of human life without a threat upon your peace by some kind of devilish misery. It is at these moments that the test comes as to whether our philosophy is worth its salt or not.

Well! There you are, a conscious human soul in a tired and distressed body, menaced by some sort of horrid darkening of the lamp of your vital spirit of resistance; and what are you going to do? You can, of course, get through it—we generally do *somehow*—with a lamentable sigh, or a doleful curse, or with bitter tears; but the point I want to make now is that it is possible by a mental movement that in time becomes automatic, to defeat and drive back this mood of misery, and even attain, under the very horns and stench of this palpable devil, a tolerable modicum of defiant happiness.

My own procedure under these conditions is to try the 'Ichthian' plunge first, if I have energy enough; but, if not, to fling myself into the aloofness of the de-carnation trick. Force your soul to leap up from the depths of your being. Force it to make of the material pressure round you a typical specimen of the hardness and prickliness and scaliness and dreariness of the devilish side of life.

Lump the evils together, the physical ones, the mental ones, and the whole damned 'outfit'. Then pulling

dead, it would so press against the partition of this next dimension that we should hear the mathematical wall crack.

And if with the violence of the 'Ichthian' act you can plunge, when you are miserable, into the great world-substratum of death and press through this into the unknown dimension beyond, you can stand apart from the whole process by the act of 'de-carnation' and turn yourself into a pure disembodied consciousness, a consciousness that can hover not only outside the sensitized organism of your own bodily identity, but sufficiently apart from the whole astronomical spectacle as to be able to regard it with a measure of detachment.

It seems a peculiarity of human nature that we can bear up better under sudden tragic disasters than under the normal pressure of the dreary, the squalid, the futile, the commonplace; and it is in resistance to these things and against these things that it is necessary to acquire the habit of these two mental devices, the one giving us strength to plunge deeper into the reality of life and death, and the other enabling us to contemplate them both as it were from outside and with a certain curious aloofness.

To make all this clearer and more concrete for the reader of this book let me at this point suggest an only too possible actual situation. Allow me to assume that you are following a forlorn road in some district of some town where the houses are unappealing and where the shops and pavements have given place to that peculiar shoddiness that is only not quite so forbidding as the vulgarest kinds of suburban trimness.

As you advance you grow aware of that particular kind of dreariness hanging like a sour breath over all you see, that would be impossible alike in the heart of a town and in the heart of the country. The vulgar neatness of prosperous new villas might be worse, but in that case your nature would be roused to an angry distaste which at least would give you the satisfaction of something to

people call intelligence. Let us see what can be done with that. Here you are, 'fairly landed' in a network of fatality; and though ill luck has certainly played its part, the unwisdom of your decisions, the weakness of your will, have played their part too.

Well! tired and sick of the whole business as you are, it does remain that you're not yet prepared to commit suicide. Even in your weariness, potent though the devil is in such conditions, you don't feel like ending it. Something, some natural human instinct, holds you back from the thought of killing yourself, and, besides, at the very bottom of your organism stirs still that holy spawn of the last ditch that mortals call hope. But what of the great philosophers? Can *they* help at this juncture?

The worst of the great philosophers is that they each offer their particular nostrum as if it were the only way. Life is so manifold that in reality there are many ways of salvation! Secretly, in their own private life, we may suspect that Socrates and Epicurus and Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, and even the formidable Spinoza, had recourse when they were harassed by circumstances to all sorts of mental devices quite other than the particular panacea they publicly recommend. With all moralists and philosophers there enters a special kind of egoism which commits them to a particular line of argument. What inspires their books is really the angel-demon of their temperamental fatality. This is their initial and original vision; and their superiority consists in the depth of this flash of primary insight, an insight generally reached, as William James hints, in one superb movement of imaginative reason. But such is the massive and sturdy egoism of these powerful brains that having once snatched at their one inspired aperçu, they proceed for all the rest of their lives to prop it up and thicken it out by logical reason. And reason, being the thing it is, never as wise as mother-wit, never as inspired as imagination, sees to it that having once committed themselves to their particular cosmic clue, these thinkers keep on to the end, justifying it, de-

point of view the more conjuring tricks we have in our pilgrim's wallet the better, and that I have no fanatical preference for *my* favourite magic over all the rest.

I am anxious, however, in this first chapter to reduce my subject to its most stripped and primordial terms; and brought down thus to the bed-rock of human experience, what we are all confronted with is the necessity for *some* magic of the mind if we are to escape the pressure upon us of these dark hours when the burden of our normal existence seems more than we can endure. And where what I call the 'Ichthian' act—though there are doubtless many other restorative tricks of the persecuted spirit—has the advantage is in its trick of gathering into one grand cloud of evil *all* our mental and physical discomfort. And this it does by stripping the situation of all particular causes of worry and pain, until what we have left is the individual soul confronted by a world composed in *the lump* of suffering-bringing elements. A few of the worst of these must be simply 'forgotten'—and the forgetting power within the soul is the gods' greatest gift to man—but the bulk of them must simply be lumped together.

It is certainly advisable to recall the precept, 'In the destructive element immerse!' only we must recall it with deep reservations, for it is not given to any mortal man to face *all* and live.

Let me recapitulate a little so as to make each step of this particular technique as clear as I can. The unlucky person I have had in mind all this while as a typical example of our common lot finds himself, or herself as I have said, confronted by objects of almost unredeemed forlornness, not desolate enough to reach what might be called the sublime of desolation, but so dreary, miserable, meaningless, and commonplace as to dry up the soul with a sick revulsion from the whole business of being alive.

The person in question has been hurt by the unkindness or driven to the end of his tether by the unhappiness.

which we either give up our will or exert our will, either pull ourselves together, or relax ourselves completely, are anything but easy to achieve. They require constant practice, over long periods of time, and they require, just as my 'Ichthian' act does, a certain elasticity of mind if not a certain resistance of vitality. We have to 'have the heart' for such experiments before we can make them; and what you feel at this second of time is no heart for anything. Nevertheless, wearily and inertly, using no effort except the mere movement of thought, you can at least lump your many worries and your many miseries together; and when you have done so pretend to project your soul into the air at your side. From this aloofness to it all, then, and still as wearily as you please—for, there is a faint, weird element of self-pleasing in all inertness—contemplate this pain-causing lumped-together universe.

Here is your soul, like a broken-winged Space-Bird, watching cursorily this bubble of an earth-life; watching it without love, without hate, without curiosity—just watching it in weary detachment. Watch it a little longer now, O persecuted soul, just one second longer, and you will perceive, if I am not mistaken, a mysterious feeling, slowly, very slowly, beginning to take possession of you. It is as though a strange sort of trance were stealing over your senses, a waking-trance that will soon become, if you continue staring at this lumped-together world, a sensation as if you were waiting along with the whole universe for some withheld clue.

Suddenly—without realizing that you have already escaped from the worst of your personal misery—you will feel aware that this piled-up cosmic mass in front of you shares your plight. As you go on watching it it will seem to be, this whole inanimate world, in as sad a case as your own. You have hypnotized yourself in fact by staring at this lumped-together world with its implication of dumb expectancy, till you feel as if in your own trance-like state you were in touch with some strange universal

and silent we await what has been awaited for so many unthinkable millions of years; and though no clue is given we at least feel we are sharing the 'rooted sorrow' in the bones of life itself and are already dwelling in that strange 'no-man's-land' that lies beneath all human consciousness.

What we touch, as from this vantage-ground of our detached soul we contemplate life and death, is the universal ingredient in all human wretchedness, I mean in such wretchedness as stops short of extreme pain or of direct sympathy with extreme pain; and I feel as if I find what I am looking for in an amalgam of three evil things, all ending in the letter 'y', Misery, Apathy, Worry. It is this devil's trinity, with this long-tailed she-demon of a 'why' at the end of each member, that we have to attack at the root.

Stronger measures than any I have the power to tell of are naturally our resource when in extreme pain; but in this misery, in this worry, in this apathy, I do feel I may be able to suggest something that might work the desired end; and that, too, without resorting to the more energetic technique of what I call the 'Ichthian' act.

The particular human attitude I am now suggesting resembles that of a patient beast with its rump against the weather, but with its conscious soul watching both the weather and its misery from a certain distance. I am imagining you, reader, in this woeful state, surrounded by all the sights which evoke the atmospheric condition known as 'dreariness' and with all your private griefs thick upon you. Your spirit is so low that you wish you were dead, though you lack the heart to commit suicide.

If you had your desire it would be to lie down upon some solitary bed, away from every living person, and forget who you are or what you are, or that you have ever lived!

Well! In place of seeking such a bed of oblivion just try the experiment of 'lumping together'—I have to keep repeating this clumsy expression—all your worry, misery, apathy in one evil mass of detestation and then from a

reality of earth, air, water, fire, as these elements emphasize themselves and swallow up the dreariness.

And as in your weakness and your melancholy you still observe these things, these blackened boards, this oily water, these dirty windows, these sad chimneys, this harsh cement, you will feel in them only the ancient hardness of the earth, only the ancient emptiness of the air, only the ancient washing of the tides, only the ancient burning of the sun, and there will come over you the grand and sombre tragedy of all human life confronted by these things and of all these things confronted by human life from the very beginning of the story.

And you will feel your own life with all that long procession of lives before it, and you will feel your own death with all that long procession of deaths before it, and by degrees these two awarenesses will blend in an emphasis you have never felt before, while the impress of the inanimate things about you, their forbidding *alienness* confronted by this pitiful oblong bundle of nerves which is yourself, will take on a different character.

Balanced thus in a perpendicular position among these things, your unhappy organism, shaped like a sausage, tied at the neck and at the waist with string, will feel through its fibres as your soul watches it the dim faint stir of an emotion that is not an altogether unhappy one!

The sense of a nobler, a more serious drama going on than you had guessed at is upon you now, and your future moments of misery will come to you with a difference. While you are watching your own lumped-together miseries and the lumped-together inanimates of desolation around you, you touched the bed-rock bottom of the world. On that dark glass—harder than despair itself—you tapped with your forehead and though there was no answer to your tapping, simply to have tapped was something.

'The Pleasure which there is in life and death' flowed through you at that moment, and a curious awareness of something in your mind outside the whole game

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Though you lacked the spirit to make the 'Ichthian leap', you did manage the act of 'de-carnation'; and as you hovered and wavered in your humming sea of misery—apathy—worry, watching your perpendicular self like a poor drowned sausage tied at the neck and the waist with string, bobbing up and down, you clutched a shell of pure mother-of-pearl, the pleasure which there is in Life and Death at the very bottom of the world!

Let Conscience Speak

THERE come moments in all our lives when we say to ourselves, 'What does it matter whether I feel happy or not?' Now this mood is of all moods the most insidious and dangerous. The next step is to say to ourselves, 'I will, I will, I *will* be unhappy!' And it is then that we begin giving ourselves up to that dark under-flow of *the will to destruction*, which, if it does not exist in the nature of the First Cause—as it sometimes seems to do—certainly exists, as an appalling and most real element, in the nature of all men and women.

The moment our relations with other souls enters the arena what we call our 'conscience' becomes active enough. It is when we are alone that this particular danger arises, the danger of being obsessed by the Power of Self-Destruction.

So deep is the mandate of conscience, do what we can in every human heart, that in all matters of external behaviour few things play a more fatal part, but a great many people allow themselves to go on being miserable simply because, while they use their conscience in other relations of life, something prevents their using it in this crucial personal sense.

I am introducing this question thus early in my book because I feel that everything else is of secondary importance in the art of happiness compared with this fundamental matter. Our conscience is always forcing us to make the necessary efforts to get through our work, to

comes under new influences. The conscience grows as other living things grow, and it can be blighted and withered as they can; and what I would like to point out here is that in all the great spiritual teachers from Laotze to Spinoza the chief stress is laid upon what you are feeling in the secret depths of your own soul rather than upon exterior actions.

The greatest among the medieval saints always laid this same stress on the feelings of the soul as against any outward manifestation and the whole quarrel between Laotze's interpreter, the wayward and wind-loving Kwang-Tze and the ritualistic Confucius, was because the former insisted that nothing mattered in this question of virtue but the flowing water and the wavering air of the soul's own secret life.

There is, indeed, all the way down the ages, a secret freemasonry, passed from mouth to mouth among certain great teachers, laying this same stress upon the inner feelings of the soul as against outward actions.

Some philosophers even go so far as to hold the view that if you habitually indulge in deep secret malicious thoughts with regard to a particular person you can seriously injure that person; but if the mood of your deepest soul is on the side of evil when it indulges in hate, it is equally on the side of evil when it indulges in what the medieval schoolmen called 'acedia', that destructive self-malice which pours poison into the wellspring of our own soul.

There are two ways in which the magic of life can be brought low. It can be beaten down from outside by brutal tyranny; and it can be weakened at the root by this soft and melancholy worm of self-malice. There is no doubt that psychic vibrations of some kind emanate from all our moods. Not even the most rigid materialist can gainsay this. And when a person allows himself to be unhappy day after day and year after year, what he is really doing is helping the spirit of evil.

Can it be that there is a vein of this self-destructive

Dramatis Personæ in a vast deep tragical Play, of which we know neither the beginning nor the end. We all live in an invisible as well as a visible world and between these worlds there are more communications than we guess. The whole cosmos, visible and invisible, is a battle-ground of warring spirits. Nature herself has something in her of inexplicable evil, something in her that drags downward, that feeds on dissolution, something lemur-like and wraith-like that lives on the dead. And this unfathomable battlefield is full of ancient arenas of disaster. Terrible waste-lands and ghastly no-man's-lands are there, with old milestones of defeats, old stakes of death, old rags of lost and discoloured banners drooping over pits of the forgotten slain.

No man knows the issue of it. None have seen the 'High Command' on either side. There seems no 'High Command' at all. There only seems on one hand a blind dim multitudinous stirring and heaving towards the light, and on the other a wild chaotic panic-rout, drifting towards the darkness.

And this battlefield of the unfathomable cosmos is composed of minds, of thoughts, of the inner life of nerves. What we call the objective Universe, what we call Nature, are things quite as much *created* by the innumerable minds that throng them as they are things discovered by these.

Nature to man is one thing. To a beast, to a fish, to a bird it is another thing. To an elemental of the air it is yet another thing! And who shall say which is the reality? Yes, the cosmic battlefield is a battlefield of mental forces, clashing upon mental levels. No two human beings see the same 'real universe'. There is no real universe. There are as many 'universes' as there are minds. Something, some mysterious 'field of intercourse', holds all these separate universes together, and this 'field of intercourse', this meeting-ground of mental worlds, is the battlefield of our life. A battleground? It is a phantom-ground of inexplicable mystery, across which old terrible

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h-cries of defeat, and old terrible exultation-cries of
ory go tossing and wailing by on eternally recurrent
nds.

The new conquest of the air in our generation, in this
ginning of what our astrologers call 'the Aquarian Age',
a material symbol of the communication that has al-
ways been taking place—though only realized by a few
oothsayers and poets—between all the bewildered off-
spring of our doomed planet. There have always been
'wireless' interchanges, as the battle between the forces of
destruction and the forces of creation ebbed and flowed,
Paul to tell us that 'the whole creation groaneth and tra-
vaileth in pain together' until now. There have always
been sun-obsessed souls and moon-obsessed souls, always
been human entities ridden by the forces of destruction,
inspired by the forces of creation. There have always
been human entities closer to the earth, closer to the in-
animate, both for good and evil, than others. This out-
ward world of the five senses is a thing upon which the
inner world of conscious minds is for ever working
miracles.

War? Not a second of our days passes when we are not
in a state of life-and-death struggle, when we are not
being depressed by the down-drag of defeat or inspired
by the electricity of victory.

What we call our 'conscience' is the sentinel at the gate
of the dark tower of the soul's besieged fortress. The
is treachery within the gate, there is a traitor within
walls, when we regard our unhappiness as our destiny.

If our 'conscience' does not rise up in indignation
our submission to our misery it is a devil-ridden
evil-mastered conscience. Every time you make the
quired effort and force yourself to be happy rather
unhappy you are helping to create the world. Every
you refuse this effort and hug your misery in that
of dark complicated self-malice you are helping to
trophy the world.

Let no man say it matters nothing whether you are happy or not as long as you labour for the cause of your country or the cause of your humanity. It is a lie! It is the devil speaking, though he speak 'with the tongues of angels'.

The cause of your country and the cause of humanity are nothing compared with *the cause of the cosmos*. There are forces at war here far deeper, far more important, than whether communism overcomes capitalism or fascism overcomes democracy.

The old religious people were perfectly right in making the individual soul a microcosm of the whole. Let your soul be such a microcosm, not a micropolis, not a necropolis!

Every time you gather the powers of your soul together and force yourself to be interiorly happy in the face of overpowering evils you are fighting the battle of creation against destruction.

No matter that none sees you, that none knows what is happening. The greatest struggles in the long tragic history of humanity, all down the ages, have been in spite of what 'fame' may say, *invisible struggles*, 'known only,' as the old religious people used to say, 'to yourself and God.'

What is not sufficiently realized is that the whole drama of life goes on in individual minds, and is independent of outward actions and outward events. Our life is lived in a *mental world* whereof the material background is for ever changing according to the mood of the individual mind.

And this does not only apply to imaginative or intellectual people. It applies to everyone! We may present the appearance of 'forked radishes', or of sausages tied at the neck and waist, or of scare-crows on perambulating sticks, or of fancy dolls, or of phantom-masks of tragedy. From the round knobs on the top of us there look forth upon the world those terrible holes into eternity that we call human eyes and what you see at the bottom

of these holes is the world of mind, a world full of pits that go down into hell and of corridors leading to paradise.

It is one of the conceited illusions of intellectual people that they alone live an imaginative life. Everyone lives an imaginative life in the sense that everyone half-creates by his peculiar nerves and temperament the constitution of the material world he confronts.

It is extraordinary, when you really think of it, how few people there are who make any habitual effort to deal deliberately and intensely with their secret reactions to life. We live in a perpetual pathetic hope that things are going to be 'better', which means outwardly nicer and outwardly pleasanter for us. We lavish our energy on plans to improve our condition but seldom concentrate it on heightening our mental reaction to the moment as it passes.

And yet everything else is of minor importance to this. Even our conscience—that formidable tyrant of our actions—is slack and feeble when it comes to our thoughts. The innumerable hours we spend on self-pity or on building castles in the air wherein to enjoy ourselves is a proof of this.

We ought to get it lodged in our conscience that the noblest, greatest, highest, deepest obligation we have, our one grand piety, our supreme return to the cosmos for giving us consciousness, is to heighten our mental life from moment to moment. And the heightening of our mental life means rousing up of our whole nature to defy and to enjoy, to defy the evil things, to enjoy the good things, to act as a destroyer and a creator in our secret consciousness. When you do this, when your soul gathers itself together to force your surroundings to respond to its resolute will it puts itself in sympathy with the whole creative life-tide and in opposition to the Ancient Antagonist. Is not this a thing worthy of the human conscience?

When you realize that the whole drama is a mental drama, and that the whole poignancy of it and tragic

grandeur of it lies in these secret mental struggles with the demons of worry, misery, apathy, you realize that you are an important 'Persona'—as important as any other living soul—in the great eternal tragic play. And what is more, you not only tap the invisible life-stream, as against the death-pull downwards, you feel yourself in a strange magnetic contact with the life-aura of uncountable numbers of fellow-creatures, dead and forgotten before you were born to carry on the torch, fellow-creatures who in their day wrestled with apathy, misery, and worry, and whose magnetic energy lives still in the elements around you.

Every time when in dreary and depressing conditions you refuse to yield to the death-pull you associate yourself with a multitudinous army of stout hearts, most of whom have borne worse things that you will ever have to bear.

Not a moment of your life, when, from the magic of those mysterious aspects of the universe which appeal to your particular human senses your soul has roused itself to snatch its secret joy, is lost in futility. The great secret tragic play of the mental world of our race lies behind this moment's triumph giving it an eternal significance. Because of this rousing of your inmost identity to defy the death-pull and to enjoy the unfathomable pleasure which your soul half-creates and half-discovers, you have added something to the reality of existence *which will always remain*.

Vibrations will pass from it, are even now passing from it, that will long outlive you.

The mental life of the whole human race resembles the accumulative invisible Novel of a super-Dostoevsky, heavy with an unfathomable burden of good and evil; and every moment of which your soul rises up from the depths of its being and defies these accursed devils of misery, worry, and apathy, you add something that helps to determine the grand invisible drift of this cosmic work of art. What we call reality has many layers of various and differing degrees of intensity. The visible world, since

changes according to the eye or according to the mood regards it, is less 'real' than our intense inner life of thought, while our inner life of thought is itself less 'real' the unknown dimension that surrounds and includes

What I have called the 'Ichthian' act is a desperate mental gesture, like the leap of a fish into the air, carrying us for an infinitesimal second beyond our normal life into that portion of our identity that remains at least sufficiently outside the astronomical universe to make us know for certain that *this is not all there is*.

What I have called 'the act of de-carnation' is another desperate gesture of the mind by which we project, or intensely pretend that we project, our conscious soul 'to a place in space at our side', from which we can survive in curious detachment our agitated physical organism and all its troubles.

Now, however, I have reached a point when I must strain my reader's patience to the uttermost by begging him to let me make use of a third invented name to emphasize a less desperate and more normal movement of the soul. I have no doubt that the use of these fancy words will be peculiarly irritating to the type of human mind always inimical to my own; but this book is nothing if it isn't an attempt to hand over to others the particular mental tricks that at a pinch have best served my own turn, and I have always found the opinion of the old magicians to be true, that you get an advantage over a thing—whether angelic or demonic—the moment you can name it. Where would psycho-analysis be, for instance, without its curious language?

In Shakespeare's time you often had to invent words for certain poetical feelings. In our time, in this beginning of the 'Aquarian age', you have to invent words for psychological feelings.

Well, the word I am going to use for this calmer and less desperate gathering together of the forces of the soul is the word 'Panergic', and I use this word not only

cause of its richly satisfying sound but because just as with 'Iehthian' I brought in a Catacomb-Christian allusion, and with 'de-carnation' a breath of those old Gnostic Heresies that have always fascinated me, so with 'Panergic' I remind myself of that mysteriously alluring and most significant expression of Aristotle's, "*energhia akinisis*" which, though applied by him to the nature of the Deity, can I think without presumption be applied to all living minds.

It would be a great disappointment to me if this small treatise on what, after all, is the most important personal matter in human life, were only to appeal to that exclusive minority—not by any means always the wisest among us—that we have come to call the 'Intelligentsia', and so I hope to be able to make clear what I mean by the 'Panergic act' without having recourse to any elaborate metaphysical justification of the term. It is a beautiful word and a pleasant-sounding word; and, if I can make plain what I am driving at in using it, it will have served my turn well enough.

The truth is that the simplest of us know how often we are vexed and ashamed by the pettiness and tiresomeness of our thoughts when we are not engaged in absorbing labour or distracting play. A worker or a peasant who has spent unfairly long hours at his job has the best excuse for allowing his thoughts to fall into a series of irrelevant wanderings, giving him no pleasure, doing him no good, not even—for they keep hovering round a thousand grievances and a thousand vexations, resting or relaxing his tired brain.

But if your working hours are reasonable, whether you work with head or hand, so that you are not dog-tired when they're over, it does, when you come to think of it, seem preposterous that you go on day by day letting them debouch here and there at random. I beg the readers of this book just to keep an eye on their thoughts to-day, as they go to work and return from work, or as they let their hands drop from their machine, or their tool, or their

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n, or their needle, or their typewriter, in intervals of their labour, and I believe they will, like myself as I take my exercise, be shocked by the silliness and vanity of the things round which these random thoughts keep hovering. Why is it that after all these long centuries of human experience of earth-life while we have learnt to be such adepts at everything else we are still so helpless and babyish in the management of the most important thing of all, the working of our own mind?

I think it is because, while we have put *the imperative of conscience* behind everything else, we have left our thoughts to their own stupid and tiresome devices. What a thing the mind of a living person is—the miracle of miracles, the god of gods! But into this thrice-precious, this thrice-holy vessel we allow the very litter and debris and offscouring of the world to drift as it will, carried there by every wind that blows.

And my secret impression is that we are all alike in this, the ones with clever brains equally with the most simple-minded. I believe we would be singularly ashamed of most of our 'great men' to-day, if we could watch the bits of rubbish, the wind-blown straws of unmitigated silliness, that pass unrebuked in and out of those famous heads.

And it is not as if we were really 'relaxing', as people call it, or resting our exhausted energies, when we make no attempt to stop these dung-beetle larvæ, these flying ashes from the everlasting dustcart, these prickly burrs, these fumes of the prison-house, these meaningless midgets of memory, to find harbourage in a mind that is taken millions of galaxies of burning constellations, millions of miracles of chance and fatality to call into being. Many of the 'thoughts'—what a word for these controllable invaders!—that in our weakness we dally with anything but soothing or peaceful. Very often we comfort ourselves quite unconsciously, if I may use so gross a comparison, scratching our minds when they itch with these midgets.

Constantly we find ourselves wincing under the affliction. But most often we just give a sigh of shame when we discover the number of minutes that we have allowed ourselves to pick the wretchedest scraps of memory to pieces, or to build up the most meaningless mud-pies out of the wastelands of random observation. Heaven knows we become the slaves of our consciences in other things. Why can't we put into these terrible angels' heads to start one of their remorseless taboos, one of their ferocious campaigns, in regard to our random thoughts? Everybody knows how soon, how fatally soon, *a conscientious habit*, full of ridiculous exactions, gets complete mastery over us. When you consider that the real underlying drama of life, that tragic drama which is heavier with doom and richer with triumphant consummations than all our external historic events, takes place on the invisible mental plane, whereof the stage is the secret consciousness of men and women, does it not seem as though we were indeed under some inherited curse that we keep our conscience for what we *do* rather than for what we *think*?

Our religious ancestors had an advantage over us in that they believed in a Heavenly Eye that followed all their thoughts. But this advantage was spoilt for them by the extreme stupidity and narrow-minded jealousy of the brain behind this Eye. They felt, for instance, overwhelmed with shame if it caught them thinking lecherous thoughts; whereas of all classes of thoughts, if they are not of a sadistic character, that a sensible conscience would encourage rather than condemn, thoughts of an amorous or erotic character would rank second to few.

Our pious ancestors, feeling themselves under the All-seeing Eye, prided themselves on forcing their scattered thoughts to concentrate on God. I can well recall, in my father's Somersetshire village, listening to the eloquent and *ex tempore* invocations at many a 'Prayer-meeting', as they used to be named, of our aged parish clerk, Mr Childs. How the old man's uplifted hands used to shake, and what tears of emotion would roll down his bearded

cheeks, as he prayed that 'each and every one of us should think of high and heavenly things'!

This meant no doubt that this aged servant of God had it on his conscience in his moments of leisure to think of such matters as his redemption by Christ and his assurance of seeing his Redeemer with his own eyes after death.

Somewhat different, but not less remote from the visible world, are those 'high and heavenly things' that mystics and idealists of all ages have been compelled by their consciences to ponder on, and to call on their disciples to ponder on. What were the thoughts of Socrates, when he fell into one of his famous trances, now on the battle-field, now in the streets of Athens, now on the threshold of some lively symposium with his intellectual young men? What did his 'conscience' call upon him to brood on beyond the beauty of Alcibiades? No doubt upon that super-dimension of loveliness and reality that he felt to be the abiding essence of the transitory glories of this mortal world.

And what for the great Plato were these 'high and heavenly things', corresponding to the old Montacute clerk's meditations on his Redemption through Christ? What were, in actual fact, the mental images that this greatest of idealists felt upon his conscience to summon up as he walked home to his treasured collection of the 'sayings' of Parmenides from his own lectures in the Academia? Vague poetical essences, may we not suppose they were, wherein, under the form of 'ideas', fairer rivers than the waters of the Ilyssus, lovelier divinities than looked down on him from the Parthenon, more gracious youths than ever listened to his teaching in the Academia, revealed to his imaginative reason what, especially for those fortunate souls who had been purified in the 'Mysteries', the Beyond-Life held of unspeakable perfection?

'So much poppycock!' the sturdy tribe of Lucretius will exclaim, 'all Moonshine, all Midsummer Madness!'

Personally I take a different view. I hold that although our aged clerk's homely thoughts of his redemption by the Blood of the Lamb are not *exactly* corresponded to by any secret cosmic truth, and although Plato's 'Back-of-the-World', full of invisible archetypes a thousand times more fair than their broken and mirrored images in our present experience, does not exactly answer to the truth of things, yet there is an element of genuine correspondency in them both, representing something at variance with the science of any Lucretius and yet a real aspect of life.

But what I am now suggesting as the kind of subjects upon which our modern conscience, changed a little from both the metaphysical conscience of Plato and the evangelical conscience of Mr. Childs, would do well to command us to think, for I am as frightened, in the presence of the censorship of modern enlightenment, of referring to St. Paul's words upon this subject as St. Paul himself was of mentioning fornication, are matters much less ideal.

What my idea of the 'Panergic act' amounts to in fact, if you can only get your conscience into the habit of commanding it, is an emphatic gathering up before your mind of those little-great compensating pleasures which make your existence bearable.

There are naturally occasions when it seems a kind of mockery to try to think of such things; and if you are, let us suppose, a harassed woman with many children, an overworked charwoman, say, driven to the end of your tether by worry and anxiety, it is likely enough that all you can possibly do is to get through each day, as it comes, as stoically as you can. The same thing must, I fear, apply often in these times to many a man without work watching helplessly some child or wife of his, in worse health perhaps than himself, struggling against desperate odds to keep some job which undermines both body and spirit.

It is obvious that all a person can do in a book like this is to suggest certain mental tricks and palliatives for those luckier people who are not yet quite at the end of their tether, and who, while grimly holding on with all the

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ngth they have, do still possess some measure of men-
detachment wherewith to contemplate their state.
it is clear that if you are an over-burdened charwoman,
st able to support the children you already have and
ow threatened with another, or if you are a man out-of-
ork whose child, who *has* a job, is suddenly menaced
with consumption as the result of this job, you may well
nquire bitterly enough, 'What is the cosmos to me?
What is Conscience to me? What is all this talk about
"Ichthian" acts and "Panergic" acts to me?"

Well, I must confess that under these extreme con-
ditions just as under the pressure of extreme pain, all
human panaceas tend to seem an ironical mockery,
an adding of insult to injury.

Probably at such times, unless you are a superhuman
philosopher, your mental shifts and devices will have
to suspend operations until chance, or death, or the aid
of someone, more practical if not more Christian than
any philosopher, comes to your rescue. Till then the
utmost you can do is to hold on without getting drunk
or committing suicide.

But let me assume that your case is not quite so bad
as this, not so bad, at any rate, for it to be a ghastly
mockery for anyone to mention happiness in your
presence.

Let me assume that you are dreading some particular
interview with someone on the subject of money, and
interview upon which you feel your fate depends, but
which is, of all things in the world, the hardest for you
peculiar disposition to face.

Or let me assume that you are preparing to undertake
some responsible task the accomplishment of which seems
to you insecure, uncertain, doubtful; some task in which
you will have to keep your wits about you if you
not to be miserably humiliated, some task which, if
fail to carry it off, will bring about the loss of your
some task in which you will be forced to 'bluff' but
be in devilish danger of having your bluff exposed!

Of course it would be possible to go on for ever giving examples of the agitating crises that are always occurring, even in the most uneventful lives: but, whatever they may be, it is in view of the nervous misery of such situations as these, easy perhaps for others, but well-nigh intolerable to us, that a few crafty mental tricks might well be called on, to apply a modicum of soothing ointment to our spirit.

And in my opinion the mental gesture of intensely envisaging and holding tight to the particular great little pleasures that have most heightened your life is of the utmost value here, though I feel you have to think of these things in a rather especial way. Let me give you a concrete example of what I mean. You are, let us suppose, even now walking to the place where you have to face your doom, one way or the other, in this miserable responsibility. Dark and wet with rain are the grass-patches you pass and the smoke-blackened hedges have those sticky, little leaves on them that so thrilled Ivan Karamazov. And your human mind, that it has taken millions of constellations to bring to birth, and which, once born, may never according to the great Pantagruel, 'be cut off by Atropos' scissors,' is so miserably occupied by nervous fears that for its dear life it cannot inhale a moiety of healing dew from this rain-dark grass or snatch the least flicker of joy from those sticky leaves magical as the spittle of Jesus.

But come now! Drive your mind deeper and further than this frightful immediate responsibility that so hangs over you. Treat it *as if it were much worse than it is*. Treat it as if it might kill you. Look at these wet grass-blades as if for the last time. Yes, you are going to die, going to lie dead and cold with everything over.

Well! when you *do* die, as a result of facing this business, just remember these sticky leaf-buds! Look at them closely now, so as to have them in your mind when this affair finishes you off.

I tell you the foundation-stone of all human happiness is the thought of death. Gather your thoughts

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before as you would do if you were going to your execution. In one swift motion of your mind think of all things that have meant most to you. Face to face with your imaginary death you mentally clutch tight at the person you really love the most, seize for the last time, the poignancy, and pathos of this person's existence, and then you snatch with a terribly swift snatch all this magic of earth and air and sunlight and rain that you are having.

And still moving forward to the place of your humiliation and death you now proceed to bid an everlasting farewell to all those little homely pleasures that have made life tolerable to you, all those moments when you have been happy over your book, happy over your food, happy over your fire, happy over your drink, happy as you smoked and read your paper, happy as you dug your garden, happy as you turned over to sleep in your bed! Swiftly—for thought is swifter than light—you make an inevitable selection from these things, and, as you make this selection, all these things, your one great love and your little pleasures, will take on that tragic heightening that the approach of death alone can give.

And holding your death vividly in your consciousness gather your spirit together to face this appalling crisis. It is a grotesque weakness at the very moment when you are holding death itself back at arm's length, as we all are, to be in such a plight because of a situation that at the worst will not do worse than humble you to the dust. This 'Panergic' act of mine is not any desperate leap into some unknown dimension. It is no frantic escape of your consciousness from your body. I will tell you what is. It is the supreme gesture of your bed-rock sense proportion as to the relation between worry and death.

The great thing is to bring your conscience to bear this whole matter. The human conscience is already least among a large minority, issuing its imperatives to refine upon our sense of beauty, to pursue truth, cultivate kindness and goodness, but it has not yet

cept in a kind of intermittent accidental way here and there, taken upon itself to command us *to force ourselves to be happier than we are* especially in crucial and difficult circumstances.

What we call pleasure comes and goes, but the Panergic act implies a recognition that all the living organisms of our race are struggling against vicious odds. Every moment you force yourself to be happy in spite of all you let loose upon the invisible world of human minds a current of magnetic force upon which—whether you know it or not or whether *they* know it or not—others instinctively draw.

The truth is, happiness of this kind has not yet been properly defined. It is as spiritual as it is sensuous, as intellectual as it is nervous. It is an acceptance of both life and death as things that culminate in a mental war, a war against misery, apathy, worry, and futility. It is a movement of the mind by which you isolate the things that most especially thrill you out of all the rest, and hold them up, as it were before you, and clutch them to your spirit.

The ground of this Panergic embrace of the things that you are born to enjoy, things like food and drink and love and sleep, and the magic of the elements and reading of exciting books, and the fitful expressions on the face of Nature, and the motley spectacle of the streets of towns, is your sense of the weight of the multitudes of the dead behind you, calling upon you to fill up the quota of such as overcome futility.

We all have sooner or later to face the ultimate question, 'How have any of us a right to be happy at all, still less to make an art of happiness when so many fellow-organisms, both human and animal, are enduring unthinkable anguish?' And this question goes, I fully admit it, to the deep root of our whole problem. There are times when we feel so appalled by the atrocities of life that we feel as if the only possible existence for a sensitive spirit were to be a monk or a nun.

But you must remember you are after all a man, a woman, with a temperament organized by Nature to fight for happiness.

Goethe hints somewhere that Nature herself feels and is conscious through our individual minds; but it is not so much that we, to use a malicious and un-Goethean image, are like the happiness-feelers of the great cosmic cuttlefish, as that we are an organic portion of the old familiar planet that gave us birth.

Between us and the living body of our mother the earth there often seems to stir strange reciprocities and it may easily be that our happiest moments come when between our human magnetism and the earth-magnetism there is established a mysterious harmony.

But though it sometimes seems as if our happiness drew us near to the earth, our pain seems to separate us from her.

If at any moment a sensitive person were made fully conscious of the appalling pain in the world he would go mad and die howling. The creative force, however, has taken effective measures that this should not happen and we are protected from it by our selfishness and stupidity. Indeed the wonder is not so much that we can go on living and being happy with all these atrocious sufferings around us as that there should ever have entered this world at all the sympathetic nerve by which we suffer with those that we see suffering.

On the other hand there comes a point when it is necessary to fall back upon our natural egoism if we are to live at all. What is the use of shirking the plain fact that, save in the cases of a few devoted lovers and mates, and a few devoted parents and children, we are all bound to be, intended to be, allowed to be, privileged to be, *and cannot help being*, lonely and self-centred egoists?

In all these ultimate partings-of-the-ways there is something a little shocking and ghastly about an attempt to carry things to logical extremes. Life overbrims logic in every direction but we cannot escape facing this matter

of the desirability of forcing ourselves to feel sensations of happiness while people we know, and people we see, and people we read about, are suffering abominably.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that although insensitive and stupid people have to be startled out of their selfishness the more sympathetic your nerves are and the more vivid your imagination is, the more necessary is it for you to have it on your conscience to force yourself to be happy against the grain of your nature if you are not to slide into a hopeless despair. For if we are not permitted to be thus happy, either by the tender indulgence of the great poppy-strewing mother of us all or by our own mental effort, it becomes a logical impossibility for any child of Adam to be happy at all, *even for one single second*. For at every moment when someone is being happy—and this, alas! is not a fantasy but an unquestionable fact—someone else is enduring an anguish that we shrink from imagining.

Most of us never grow quite callous. We do something. We lift a finger; we give a penny; but Nature herself sees to it that we do not have to struggle very hard to remain sturdily selfish! But here we are, with the evil in the universe pressing down on all of us, on some devilishly, on some heavily, on all a little. No external event is completely under our control. Few are under our control at all. And as we go from our room to our work, or from our bed to our kitchen-grate we find ourselves surrounded by all the contrarieties of the cosmos.

On every side are sights that are grotesque, ironical, monstrous, meaningless, harsh, ugly, infinitely sad, infinitely heart-breaking, and yet touched, all of them, now and again by a magical beauty. Most of these things of whatever kind they are, are beyond our power of altering. What is there that we *can* alter or control? Certainly not, it would seem, the character of our mate, of the companion of our bed and board! His or her secret thoughts escape us completely even as our own escape his.

What can we do that is beyond the power of man, or

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id, or chance or fate, to stop our doing? What can we that will be our inmost private personal response to the mysterious cosmos that has given us our life? Well, *we can be unhappy*. We can be unselfishly unhappy, brooding in our imagination and in our nerves on the anguish felt at this moment by someone else, and we can be selfishly unhappy, brooding upon our own miseries, apathies, worries, upon our own grievances and ailments, upon our own wrongs; or *we can force ourselves to be happy*. These alternatives are within our power when nothing else is within our power. And it seems to me that it is sheer madness to let our conscience go on compelling us to do things in our own interest or in that of others, while it remains—this interior imperative—absolutely indifferent to what we are thinking or feeling!

There, opposing us, is the great chaotic world pressing in on all sides with its pains and pleasures; and *here* within us, is our secret personal mind, able to think what thoughts it pleases. And yet no imperative decree of our conscience commands us to be happy in spite of all, and to cease encouraging ourselves in our unhappiness.

The odd thing is that by some weird psychological law we do derive a perverse satisfaction—not happiness, but a self-pleasing sensation of malicious destruction and self-laceration—from encouraging ourselves in our black mood. It is a queer mystery, this psychology of self-pity that is the cause of so much misery in the world! It almost seems as if some evil demon in us were always hunting about for some new reason why we should feel wretched.

If it cannot find outward circumstances adapted to its purpose it rakes up other annoyances. I think sometime we actually have a vague childish notion that we are revenging ourselves upon life and upon the universe by insisting on hugging our misery. As though the universe cared! What suffers from it is that vast invisible world of other conscious minds whose struggles with themselves make up the great tragic drama of human life. This visible world of countless human intelligences, linked

gether by magnetic vibrations, receives a downward pull from the obstinate unhappiness of any single human soul.

Thus it works out that you *do* revenge yourself upon something! What one feels, however, is that it is hardly the part of a magnanimous mind to revenge itself upon the human race who are not in the least responsible in order to punish an unsympathetic universe, or god, or fate, or evil chance, that *is* responsible.

Still more childish does it seem to go on hugging your unhappiness in order to punish some particular class in the community, some particular set of people, or even some particular person who has done you harm, when from your own showing, this class, this set of people, this particular person, cares not a jot about it! It is no punishment to *them*. If they felt anything at all about the matter they might even feel a mild satisfaction that you were unhappy. To be unhappy in order to punish! That really does seem an human instinct. But how pathetically absurd! It is like that grave outraged, indignant look we are all in the habit of turning upon the thing when something in our path trips us up. We swing solemnly round to glare at this wrong-doing inanimate, even if it be no more than an uneven stone; and our expression at that moment has a portentous severity that is ridiculous.

It is our punishing expression, and it is to be hoped it does us good, for it is certain that the object of our wrath remains unaffected. What I mean, therefore, by 'the Panergic act of the mind' is the gesture, sometimes a really heroic gesture, by which in spite of everything we insist on forcing ourselves to feel happy. What this act of the mind does is to concentrate—always with a back-consciousness that we're lucky not to be dying in extreme pain—upon a compressed essence of all the simple aspects of life that give us our chief pleasure. It is not exactly that we think to ourselves, 'Well! I shall at any rate be soon pulling the bedclothes under my chin and turning over to sleep'; or that we think to ourselves,

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I soon be sitting down to a cup of tea'; or that
nk to ourselves, 'I shall soon be alone and walking
that path where there's no traffic!' or that we think
rselves, 'I shall soon be getting back to my book';
at we think to ourselves, 'I shall soon be talking to
girl, or to my man, over the fire'; for it is rather a
ation called up by the mind than a definite thought.
But as you enjoy in your imagination a sort of thought-
ence of these simple things you associate them in you
nd with something sweeter, vaguer, more intangible stil
th that diffused sensation of well-being which Words-
orth was thinking when he spoke of 'the pleasure which
here is in life itself'.

I have myself sometimes experienced a most extra-
ordinary thrill in connection with this 'Panergic act' in
another and further overtone. I refer to a curious sharing
of your life-sensation with the life-sensation of the gene-
rations of the dead. These men of old times as they wen
about their affairs had just the same vague, sweet, ir-
tangible indirect sensations as we have. And over 2
these 'little things' upon which we concentrate now, over
all these small material sensations that keep alive our
cosmic well-being hovers the consciousness that we are
all 'in the same box', all on the same familiar high-road
of mischances, all between the same inn-fire of sweet love
and the same gibbet on the blasted heath.

At the bottom of everything, below love and work and
beauty and good and evil, lies this tragic alternative, this
abysmal parting of the ways. Are we going to force our
spirit to create the feeling of happiness within us, or are
we going to yield to the demon of destruction? What, a
matter of fact, we come to feel, as we practise the
'Panergic' gesture, is that we are doing it not only for ou-
selves but for *something else*: and this 'something el-
for which we are doing it is nothing less than the wh-
upward spring of the creative force in the universe.
It is not as though this happiness were an easy t-
or an inevitable thing. It is not only the grand tou-

force of our doomed mortality, it is the act by which ere it resolves itself into the dust, *through* our mortality, strange intimations of a possible immortality reach us.

And there is a way of thinking of death from which you can get pleasure. For there is a positive something in death, just as there is in life, which has nothing to do with the pain of dying or with the decomposition of the body. No one cries out, 'I wish I were in pain!' but there are many people who cry out, 'I wish I were dead!' and when they do this is there not an under-consciousness about it, that implies a feeling for death beyond the mere negative of the misery of life?

This mysterious positive pleasure that it is possible to associate with death quite apart from the desirability of escaping the pain of life corresponds in a measure to the delicious moment of going to sleep, which is indeed its earthly simulacrum.

Now all these primordial sensations, produced by sun and fire and food and drink and air, make up, with the sense of sleep, and with our movements between earth and sky, what might be called *the diurnal continuum* of 'the pleasure which there is life and death', and we have a right to enjoy them, as Homer so often reminds us, even at the moments of our greatest sorrows.

To turn away from the presence of tragic suffering with a burst of facetiousness—unless it were the facetiousness of a Swift or Dante, or the humour of a Shakespeare or Rabelais—would be a monstrous thing and against the grain of all natural human instinct, but to eat bread, to feel the sun, to bend over the fire, to breathe the air, to walk across the face of the earth, are sensations for which we have the plenary indulgence of Nature herself, even at our most tragic moments, as the world goes round.

For into these ancient compensations of our tragic life death has already entered. It has touched our bread and its own terrible and magical consecration. It has entered into the flame of our hearth-fire. It has mingled with the grass we walk on, with the earth-mould into which we

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ink. It has passed into the flowing of the waters, the substance of the sands on the shore. The taste of bread, the breath of the air, the feeling of movement, the sense of sleep, have already become, in their association with human life an actual part of the invisible tragic drama in which all mental life is involved.

Daily we eat and drink and breathe our dead; nightly we are gathered to our dead in sleep. In the feelings derived from these things we become one with that great mysterious tide of Being, wherein all grief resolves itself, and which is already, since in these things the material is taken up into the immaterial, something more than mortality. With its transitory and its temporal it touches that portion of our human soul which is already outside 'the body of our death'.

What therefore I am struggling to describe as the 'Pan-ergic' act is that interior resistance of the soul, not only to misery, apathy, worry, but to the more tragic sorrows of life.

It is the basic resistance of all souls to futility and destruction, a resistance whereby we force ourselves to be happy in spite of all, recognizing that as long as the spirit in us is thus unconquered we are obeying the deepest imperative there is, not only the imperative of our individual conscience, but the imperative of that super-consciousness of mankind as a whole that carries with it the invisible pressure of all the living and all the dead!

It seems natural enough for new-born lambs to leap and skip, but when you watch the way a human infant behaves, how long and inconsolable are its sorrows, begins to dawn upon you that though happiness may be something to which beasts and birds are born, it is something that man—alone in this in all creation—has to find for himself by a constant effort.

Happiness for human beings is an artificial thing. It has been separated from happiness in some mysterious

cosmic 'fall' and his whole life is a struggle to regain what he has lost.

The 'Panergic act of the mind' is, according to my idea, one of the ways by which we can achieve this end. It is an inward motion of our whole being in which we gather our forces together in a magnetic resistance to that profound unhappiness which is natural to our transition-state between beast and god.

What we must aim at is a conscious fusion of all our bodily senses *in thought* rather than any definite thoughts. Mix the spirit with the senses, the god in us with the beast in us and thus grasp the pain-giving cosmos and wrestle with it! When our soul and our senses are thus fused together it is as if from the pit of our stomach, from our navel, from our organ of generation, as well as from some unifying force, deep within us, deeper down in our identity than our reason, there emerged an unconquerable power of resistance to suffering, a power that feeds upon sensation rather than upon thought, but a power that can hardly be called material, since it seems to flow *through* us from some buried nadir of life which is ours and yet more than ours.

My 'Ichthian act of the mind' is a desperate leap of the soul into what for us must remain the absolute darkness of the unknown dimension that surrounds our astronomical world.

My 'act of de-carnation' is a pretended projection of our centre of consciousness into the air at our side, from which detached vantage-ground it can view the limitations of our own organism, and of the organisms of others.

But the 'Panergic act' I am now describing is both a more natural and a more simple tool of our will to happiness than either of these. In making it we draw our consciousness and our energy out of our thought-process and concentrate them on our sensation-process.

Our spirit heaves itself up out of the depths of our being, armoured, as it were, in our most familiar sensations, and thus armoured confronts the pain-giving world.

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sensations that seem to serve us best at these times our simplest reactions to air, water, earth, and fire. Every soul, thus heaving up in defiance of its worries, pathies, miseries, will gather about it its own particular senses of familiar feelings.

For myself I find that my feeling for the earth under my feet, especially when it is plough-land or grass, is my chief restoration. Second to that I would put the feeling of firelight; and then the feeling of sunlight. Then I would place the look of flowing water and the feel of the blowing wind. Finally I would name among these primary sensations, wherein my soul armours itself as it heaves itself up, the pleasure I get from reading a line or two of Homer, which to me is a form of work.

This last point I want especially to emphasize, because I am sure that most human souls, when thus turning at bay, tend to revert to their favourite *sensation of work*; for in the sensation of work that we enjoy a certain part of the weight of our human destiny is lifted, as it is by nothing else. This 'work' may be a thing very different from looking out words in a lexicon. If you are a man in your garden, it may be digging, if you are a woman it may be sewing; but, whatever it is, it must be the thing that in itself, apart from any ulterior purpose, gives you most of the over-tones and under-tones that belong to the 'pleasure which there is in life itself'.

CHAPTER THREE

Woman with Man

HAVING dealt with those aspects of the individual's happiness that lie at the root of our separate conscious lives, I now proceed to deal with the matters that pertain to our happiness in relation to others, particularly in relation to our sex-mate.

I will try to cope first with the more difficult of the two chief tasks before me; that is to say with the tricks and devices, the arts and the habits, that I would recommend to a woman, so that she can retain her individual happiness even in the trying process of living with a man.

The state of 'being in love' is not only a state quite independent of affection or pity, or tenderness, or of the reverse of these things, such as hate, cruelty, callousness; it is also independent of our own will. For a philosopher to lay down laws to lovers *as* lovers is as futile as for a king to command the tides; but no man or woman is only a lover, certainly not only a lover all the time, and many quite faithful and devoted mates are able to contemplate their man or their woman with a calm and critical detachment totally alien from that excited vision which heightens every aspect of our frail mortality.

The following remarks then are addressed to the type of woman who, though she and her mate still love each other in the sense of affection and respect, is no longer under the spell cast by that radiant condition called 'being in love'.

to herself, and not always to herself, 'What is wrong with him?' But the intelligent woman knows better than any philosopher can tell her that at these junctures in human life it is oneself, and not the other, who is primarily amenable to some mental change.

She turns her gaze inward, therefore, not outward, and asks herself, first *what she wants* in order to feel happy with conscious awareness, as she used to feel happy under a blind obedience to Nature's tutelage; and next how to get what she wants. And it is then, I think, that she will find two separate deep desires within her, and find too, it may well be, that it is in some mysterious clash between these two desires that her happiness is perishing. She wants to assert herself, to taste to the full her feminine personality independently of her man; but she also wants to enjoy, possess, absorb into herself, and completely make her own this alien, foreign stranger to whom she is bound by a thousand invisible links of shared associations.

It will not be so necessary to insist to a woman as it would be to a man that in all these ultimate things the human soul has to go behind the normal moral code of the race and to take some of its weapons from what is called 'the good' and some of its weapons from what is called 'the bad'. No human soul in the lonely depths of its life-struggle can afford to be meticulously exacting about the weapons it uses, or to let itself suffer from remorse when it finds itself tampering with the moral code of its race. Such a code for instance will tell it to be absolutely 'honest' whereas any experience of life will make it plain that over and over again such absolute honesty is fatal and that to preserve our secret integrity with ourselves it is often necessary to deceive others.

Why is it that, of all people, the ones who blurt out every thought that comes into their heads and every feeling they have are the ones that tend to whittle away and thin out into pallid indistinction the rich compactness of the soul within them? In the process of their impulsive

go on with what she is doing without her man's knowledge or understanding.

The same thing applies to her books, her brie-à-brac, her sewing, her flowers, her little sensuous relaxations, into all of which she has a right to escape at the price of a thousand devices.

A discerning stranger will quickly detect something almost raw, crude, shocking, even indecent, about a couple's life where the woman's atmospheric cocoon-weaving—those subtle golden threads—have been frayed and torn and discoloured by the meddling of masculine obtuseness or the harsh fanaticism of masculine asceticism.

The same thing applies to her clothes. It is pure unwisdom in a woman to spoil the nature-given happiness that comes to her from the inner feeling that she 'looks nice', out of a proud contempt for feminine wiles. The grating bitterness of a shrew, the dingy carelessness of a slut, are the dolorous alternatives she brings down—one or the other and not unfrequently both—upon their devoted heads by her indulgence in this intellectual whim.

The stupidest of mistakes that a woman can indulge in to spoil her happiness is not to recognize once for all that her world is totally different from her man's, and that it is waste of time to struggle and fight in a vain attempt to drag him over his boundary into hers. Her world and his are separate crystal spheres that only really touch at one point, the point of their enjoyment of each other, an enjoyment which would lose its zest if what touched were two flat boards and not a magnetic point on the curve of a living planetary circle.

The reason why you see so often such a tragic strain in the eyes of the feminine partner in a life-covenant is that this particular woman has let herself be dragged so often over the No Man's Land between their separate orbits. She has indeed ceased to revolve as an independent world with her own private feminine pleasures, and has become a dusty and bedraggled fly, clinging to the

body with her body, to wrap herself, 'skin for skin' about her man, as a glittering boa-constrictor wraps itself about the beast it swallows, as shining phosphorus covers a drowning plank, or gleaming leprosy the limbs it has doomed to die.

Upon *some* measure of satisfaction for these two desires a woman's life-happiness depends, when the enchanted state of being-in-love fails her and the drugged beatitude of bearing and caring for children has passed away or is diminished by repetition.

Let us continue then in our consideration of the craft she must use to satisfy the first of these desires. Of course in her real life she will often find herself satisfying both of them together. I have watched an elderly woman rise from her comfortable chair by the fire and lay down her knitting in order to make some infinitesimal change in the furniture, the china, the drapery, the crockery, the flowers of her room. I have seen her approach the figure of her man, as he sits absorbed in his book, and bend over him, in order to touch his head with her lips.

Into that light breath, into that flickering moth's caress, there passed, as I curiously watched this scene of 'eternal recurrence', a current of electric possessiveness so soft, so steady, so remorseless, so implacable, so *infinite* that my profane spirit shuddered to behold it, as you would shudder to behold an animal disappearing into the distended skin, the skin's mouth oozy with voluptuous foam, of a possession-drugged python! What the man himself felt under this man-swallowing kiss I cannot of course be sure; but my impression was that he experienced at that moment a reaction from this particular form of 'love' so intense as to amount to a nervous spasm.

Nothing causes a nastier twinge, or a more tickling itch of irritation, to the free, lonely happiness of the soul than this cannibalistic, pythonish 'love' when it is expressed unctuously, shamelessly, indecently, and in cold blood. It makes a person feel as if he were a final tit-bit on a plate flickered over by a well-satisfied tongue. It is a

ifferent matter when this possessive love is
creely, passionately, tragically. It may be
at such times and even terrifying, but a sensi-
on feels awe, respect, pity in its presence, not
not restless rebellion, not nervous anger.
utting aside the feelings of the man in this parti-
ene which I recall watching with such curious and
interest, I have seldom beheld a human counten-
ore radiantly happy than that of this life-satisfied
s in her python's kiss she turned herself in a Shirt
sus that licked up to the very bone her mate's
orm. She was a happy woman then; and I think i.
e contact of her rosy mouth with the ivory smooth-
of her man's bald head that gave me such a funny
g. But the real truth of the situation went much
r.

is the fact of a woman's 'possessive love', though
lly shameless, being so much more diffused than a
s 'possessive lust', that enables her to indulge it so
h more constantly and publicly than he can indulge
Women are very lucky in this. Their tactile sense
o much more polymorphic than man's that they have
power of 'feeling all over' at the least touch. Psychi-
ly they are far less sensitive than men, as can be seen
the way they can get beside themselves with fury, hiss
orth the most deadly things, and a few minutes later, be
s cheerful and normal as if their outburst of furious
emper, which has left their men wounded and upset for
half a day, were the merest seud of sea-foam as the life-
wave rolls on; but their whole skin, thicker as well as
softer than a man's, is so charged with diffused erotic
inagnetism, that it is wonderful what deep satisfaction
their possessive love can get from the least contact of
fingers or lips.

What I wanted to cry out to that woman when she
kissed in that way the white skull-smooth surface of her
man's head was, 'For God's sake, madam, wait till you
are in bed!' But to have expressed even by a glance that

gross, ribald, caddish, bawdy, lecherous, brutal, masculine thought would have been unpardonably unkind to this excellent woman, who was, after all, only letting herself be at that moment supremely happy in the shameless indulgence of her heart's desire. It 'amuses me', as the spiteful ladies say when they mean 'I get wicked pleasure', when the same women who find the Rabelaisian element in a man's books unpleasantly indecent indulge in public orgies of possessive love. What they really feel—because of the magnetic conductorship of their lively skins—is just as 'indecent' as anything that a man does; in other words it is a normal, natural, inevitable feeling, and one that, like the satisfaction of all innocent lust, is a legitimate part of the fulfilment of human happiness; but my lady must forgive me if I retain my view that this particular sensual basis of our happiness gains rather than loses by a certain proud and crafty secrecy.

But what finally impressed me, as I peered so curiously at this harmless scene out of the hollow slits in my Palaeolithic skull, was that when my good woman finally returned to her chair and resumed her knitting a look of beatitude even beyond the radiance evoked by that sensual kiss took possession of her and I recognized that her eyes as they casually lifted from her needles rested on that little alteration she had made among the flower-vases on the mantelshelf, which was her last touch to her coral 'pleasure-dome' built in the depths of the fabulous Gulf-stream of life; and what entered my prying head was that the happiness she got when her man was relegated to the background of her life—I don't mean separated from her even for a day but backgrounded into agreeable harmlessness—was a happiness more enjoyable as well as more desirable than the sensation that got that look of tipsy delight as she kissed the ivory skull.

But she couldn't have had those
couldn't have floated in such ex
the mere flowing of the life-stre

ner's polished skull I certainly did not feel any breath of Eden in what I saw; and why not? Because that caress proceeded from what in a woman corresponds to dispassionate lust in a man. It was a *kiss from the demesne below the waist*, a kiss unshared, a reducing kiss. Many maternal kisses are of this kind, as children know too well, and what they really do, such kisses, is to reduce and bring low the object which is their prey. There is a tinge of something akin to a placid sub-sadism in such kisses. To the deadly eye of a really penetrating clairvoyance there appears a vision of the victim of them growing palpably smaller and smaller beneath them, until he dwindles into helpless and idiotic babyhood.

I am of course thinking now of the effect upon the man's happiness of this indulgence in possessive lust by his woman; but it still remains that if a woman is to be happy in her life there must be found place and scope for this kind of thing. It goes too deep with her to be left in abeyance. The truth is that between a man and a woman when their state of being-in-love no longer lifts them out of themselves into that magic mutual world created by the super-senses of the ideal man-woman, there must be, if they are both to be happy, a fair and equal exchange of patient passivity. The woman, who no longer responds to the man's lust as they lie side by side, must be wise and generous to feelings beyond her reach, while the man must, in justice to her, be equally prepared to feel himself dwindling into a preposterous babyhood under her pseudo-maternity. It is only in the state of being-in-love that both the male-lust and the female-lust are caught up, transported, illuminated, spiritualized, identified, unified, but this does not mean, when a couple are kind to each other, that their basic desires must be unsatisfied.

But the first fulfilment of a woman's secret desire, when use and wont have blunted the passion of love and turned it into affection and tenderness, must always lie in one grand escape, an escape into her own separate in-

dividual world, a world into which it is a grievous mistake, and one attended by inevitable unhappiness, to try to drag her mate and her offspring. This is indeed a thing that a true feminine instinct will always warn her from attempting; but it is a thing for which she has a beautiful substitute. Every woman carries about with her her own invisibly precious world, but if certain of the fabrics out of which it is woven are the reduced-to-babyhood or the reduced-to-dollhood state of her children and their father, the delicacy and subtlety of her art will consist in the fact that these living fabrics of her airy creation are totally unconscious of what is done with them and made of them.

The question, 'What is she doing all this time while we are at work and at play?' is a question that must often in a dumb, blind fashion cross the minds of her offspring and her mate. And what is she doing? Well! she is escaping into her own world of sensation and creation, a world that links her girlhood with her womanhood, a world which all other women, save her own daughters, can make shiver to its foundations, but to which no man from the beginning of history has the faint clue.

The unhappy women in our world are not the poor, the sick, the undisciplined, the unappreciated. They are the ones who have not acquired the art to be the creators of a concrete yet infinite atmosphere. Worries and cares are the lot of all, and most women bear their marks on their faces, but who has not been astonished, as if in the presence of a miracle, by the well-spring of happiness that radiates from below these anxiety-scars and these sorrow-scars in the faces of even the most calamitous?

These are they who make use of their nearness to Nature, make use of their immersion in Reality, make use of their gusto for the Drama of Life, to create an atmospheric crystal-globe about them wherein they can live and move independently of chance and fate and destiny.

It were irrelevant in a discussion of human happiness

to say more of the too quickly passing state of being-in-love than that by fusing together as it does the diverse sense-reactions and imaginative response to life of the male and female a super-vision of things is attained which in its richness and strangeness surpasses all other felicity.

What men and women have separately to do when first love is gone is to recover in stray flashes and glimpses that heightened vision of the world which can never come again. It came because of the fusion of the man's response to the life-stream with the woman's and their subsequent life is an attempt to reach, on their different paths, this lost vision. I say on their *different* paths; for many couples make themselves bitterly unhappy by obstinately struggling to go on seeing the world as a unit when the time of this is past. What happens when they go on struggling for this against the flow of the life-tide is that they are only able to unite on a lower plane, a plane which, instead of lifting their natures up to a more thrilling happiness, is for ever bringing it down to a level of the ordinary and the normal that neither of their souls if left to itself could endure for a moment.

And they bank up each other in this narrow and limited vision until any outside soul approaching them soon recognizes the hopelessness of persuading either of them to break new and original ground. By slow degrees their two independent spirits have come to this lamentable pass, that they prefer comfort to adventure, and undisturbed security to the dangerous excitement of mental growth.

Even when this does not happen there is a danger of their propping each other up in all manner of unworthy and narrow prejudices; prejudices and mental limitations, that, if they had not been protected and defended, each by the other, could never have resisted the wholesome shocks and violences of circumstance.

The kind of human happiness I am concerned with in this book is, as I have tried to indicate, something more than the mere resisting of disagreeable shocks. It is a

Williams and Margarets, and Johns and Jennies seem like two branches of the same tree, two heads of the same dragon, two flames of the same hearth, two clock-figures of the same automatic time-piece and their associated identity produces in such a stranger a peculiar and special sense of pleasure, a pleasure which draws its poignance from all the obstacles to such an adjustment that he has experienced in his own life and from that curious satisfaction, half-moral and half-æsthetic, that even the most wilful and inartistic person derives when some immemorial human yearning, like the yearning after an ideal unity between men and women, has apparently, in one case at least, been fulfilled.

But genuine and deep though this mysterious human pleasure may be in the contemplation of our well-mated John and Joan, there are, for any searching and exacting mind, many serious after-thoughts with regard to the spiritual quality of this peaceful and comfortable association. It is a marriage of kindred feelings, of kindred enjoyments, it is a marriage that has evoked a common 'sensitive plate' of little comforts and securities, but, for all that, a real philosopher of happiness will hesitate to pronounce it a 'marriage of true minds'.

The penetrating Dutch novelist, Couperus, has gone so far as to pillory one couple of this type in the complacent and self-indulgent figures of Karel and Kateau, a couple who certainly relish the particular 'happiness' they have reached by converting their private selfishness into a double-charged unit of common selfishness, but whose 'happiness' is lacking in all elements of imagination, intellect, or spirit.

And there is always a danger that this superficial encrustation of mutual sensual enjoyment, when all shocks or disturbing vibrations from the outer world are muffled and padded away, shall grow into something most deadly and destructive to all the more thrilling and exultant inspirations. Any adequate art of happiness keeps its eye upon quality as well as upon quantity, and balances the

positive thrilling moments against the merely negative avoidance of discomfort and annoyance. The danger of this common encrustation of a united response to small sensual comforts is that it can so often only be attained by both the parties giving up what is most characteristic and spirited and illuminating in their different sexes. The subtlest instincts of a woman's soul are not the same as the subtlest instincts of a man's soul, and yet here they both are converting the proud and obstinate questionings of two mysterious living souls into perpetual fussing about keeping out draughts, winding their clocks, cosetting their digestions, trimming their lamps, mixing their drinks, dealing their cards, while the wind in the chimney is calling to her, and the rain on the window is calling to him, in wild, intermittent, desperate reminders that the cosmic mystery which men call happiness is not to be gained by a conspiracy of clinging bodies, but by the fraternization of proud and lonely intelligences.

The real deep reward of any life *à deux* is not gained by toning down the eternal woman in her and the eternal man in him to a sub-human skill in avoiding draughts and damp and rats and indigestion and economic worry and by a sub-human fastidiousness in the pleasures of the table, but by both of them carrying the high, proud, subtle, separate peculiarities of their sex to the most exultant limit. Let Jack Sprat and his wife 'lick their platter clean', there is a spiritual 'fat' and a spiritual 'lean' in the stream of life adapted to far greater differences between the two than these felicitous divergencies of palate.

As a matter of fact an intelligent stranger will often detect in these 'happy' marriages, where, apparently, two selfishnesses have become one selfishness, that the whole thing is a successful masquerade. It is not, and never was, two selfishnesses! It is one selfishness; but a selfishness so crafty as to have the power, like certain low forms of marine life, of splitting itself into two, and in-

incarnating this second self in the body of the partner of its life.

What makes the test of a really happy partnership between a man and a woman, a partnership with the full creative flow of Nature's 'intention' behind it, is the retention by each of them of the full flavour, not only of their separate sex-peculiarities, but of their separate personal peculiarities. The more different they are and the more different they remain the better!

How can such a delicate thing, such an intricately built-up thing and such an *artificial* thing, as the happiness of intelligent persons in this tragic world, afford to neglect the great natural up-welling of magnetic vitality that comes when a woman gives herself up to being a woman and a man gives himself up to being a man? To neglect the power of sex in any question of this sort is like trying to make bricks without straw.

To return, therefore, to those two profound feminine desires which, if even partially satisfied make a woman happy, as we have already hinted the satisfaction of the first of these has to do with her own secret life as an individual feminine person totally apart from both her mate and her offspring, while the second has to do with her devouring and swallowing up, like an insanely possessive python, both her offspring and her mate.

Now it must be understood once and for all that the roots of every individual's happiness descends below the level of life where what we call good and evil begin to differentiate themselves. So that to say that a woman *ought not* to have these possessive feelings is as absurd as to say that water ought not to flow, or fire burn, or ice freeze.

The whole point is, how is she going to control these feelings of possessiveness, this desire to absorb those she loves into the substance of her flesh, so that it should be the cause of intense happiness to herself, and not unpleasant to her mate and her children? Fortunately, by the compensatory law of balance in these matters, her man too, *as* a man has a profound desire of his own

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is quite as 'wicked' and rooted quite as deep in substratum below the dividing line of good and evil, as her all-swallowing love.

As he refers to his impersonal masculine lust. This impersonal lust, for all its familiar association with one feminine body, remains as non-human, as untender, as un-civilized, as satyrish and paleolithic, as it often becomes—sometimes to her astonishment—in the first days of their love-making.

Not far from where I write these lines in an ancient walled town where Cæsar's legionaries worshipped Venus there stands, for all to see, the phallic image of what is called the Cerne Giant. Now there is a 'Cerne Giant' in every man, and a 'Cerne Giant' quite as wicked in his way as the all-swallowing Python in every woman is wicked in hers, a 'Cerne Giant' who wants to make love to his woman as if to a strange woman, as if to any woman, as if to womanhood in the abstract, as if to the depersonalized essence of femininity, temporally incarnated in the familiar body at his side, and a 'Cerne Giant' too who, if he had not learned in his long life-history a certain moderation, would be as destructive, on his side, to the object of his attraction as the Python in woman might be to the object of hers.

It was the purring hiss of this Lamia-Demon in every woman that I must have been conscious of, when I shrank away in disgust from those clinging lips pressed against that ivory-white skull; but woe to the man who ever dares to show irritation when his woman suddenly kisses him.

'When women kiss,' might be the title of a very profound novel, and no doubt there are a thousand aspects to this psychological problem, but reverting to that particular case and to many other parallel ones, it has gradually become clear to me that what fills a woman with sudden irresistible desire to kiss her man is neither admiration nor pity. It is an over-powering thrill at his dignity, his self-possession, his powerfulness.

masterfulness, his self-importance, brought down and the man's unfledged, unfrocked, undefended, un-armoured, naked identity *exposed*.

She kisses him with a sudden spasm of melting tenderness when she sees him grown small, grown helpless, grown naked, ready to be rocked and lulled and comforted and fed, at her breast and on her lap.

So often must she have kissed with just such a sudden spasm of tenderness an angry and screaming infant, that a faint tinge of diffused sadism clings about this kiss of hers, the immemorial Python kiss, with which she gathers her coils like those of the mythological world-snake, about the foolish idol of her deep heart, reduced to something stripped, helpless, exposed, but at the same time to something *by no means contemptible*.

I know I am fumbling towards a very deep mystery in this; but I believe that what attracts a woman so irresistibly at such moments is not at all an unworthy or ignoble aspect of her man. It may be the diffused sadism of the doll-loving maternalism in her nerves that is her dominant urge but the uncompromising realism of her sex has much to do with it too. I think it is always at the moments when her man is most unconscious of himself, most disarmed of what you might call his masculine philosophical detachment that she feels this wave of irresistible emotion, this stir of a feeling in her which corresponds, on the feminine plane, to what in men is called lust.

It is when he is absorbed rather in what he is doing than in what he is feeling or thinking, so that his essential identity, stripped of all mental over tones, stripped of all pride, vanity and conceit, is *caught off-guard*, without mask or sword or wig, and found to resemble a touchingly preoccupied animal lost in its immediate business, that his woman thus leaps upon him with her irresistible python-kiss. While she is in the state of being-in-love she gets her thrill of happiness from idealizing her man, but when her 'being-in-love' has changed to 'loving' this idealizing ceases and its place is taken by what would

seem to the man, if he only knew about it, a pitiless and terrible realism. But this is the nature of 'love' in a woman; that love which not only outlasts 'being-in-love' but outlasts the most savage and deadly quarrels. For it seems that when women love at all they love a man's inalienable self, that self which his dignity, his pride, his masterfulness, his grandiose gestures, as well as his lust and his weakness, conceal, and conceal too not only from the world but from himself. This is the self in him that his woman loves when she has ceased to be in love and sometimes *before she has ceased to be in love*, and although it is a self that lacks all intellectual grandeur and all picturesque charm, though it is, in a sense, a stripped, reduced, and exposed self, it is not a contemptible self, for after all it is the self of a man, a unique living man, 'among such as eat bread upon the earth'.

Little girls do exactly this very thing with the doll they love best, a doll that indeed often looks, when a stranger sets eyes on it, as if it had very little beauty left. There is as a matter of fact a kind of outrage, a kind of impiety and sacrilege, when a man-thinker attempts as I am attempting now, to indicate the tricks and devices by which a woman can be happy. A woman's happiness is rarely a mental thing, rarely a self-conscious thing. It is so close to the ebb and flow of Nature's most intimate tides that is a thing much more difficult to make subject to the rational will or even to the imaginative reason than the happiness of a man.

It is indeed, at its deepest and most natural, just that very 'pleasure which there is in life itself' of which Wordsworth speaks, who for all his formalities and pedantries got closer to the essential life of young girls and to the essential life of girl-mothers, than any other writer. The one generalization about feminine happiness that I do feel safe in registering, is that, whatever it is, it is neither made nor marred by the changes that take place in morals, in attire, or even in the fashions of the toilet. A woman sticking faithfully to one love, a woman rushing about

between a dozen loves, a woman with short skirts, a woman with long skirts, a woman with her eyelashes and eyelids and lips and cheeks and tresses left as Nature made them, a woman with these mortal appendages transformed out of all recognition, has the same deep sensational under-life of happiness or unhappiness. Some old-fashioned women are happy, others deeply unhappy. Some modern girls are nervous wrecks; others are sane, practical and sturdy, and full of lively joy.

Many good women are perfectly miserable, many 'bad' women are radiantly content. So that all a philosophical adviser of these strange Beings can do, Beings between whose mysterious knees the human generations are born and die, is to offer to their consideration certain mental tricks and turns and attitudes such as might conduce to their secret happiness whether they decide to run away from their husbands, or to stay with their husbands, whether they decide to take a couple of new lovers or to renounce all lovers, whether they decide to cut off their hair and paint their lips and pluck out their eyebrows or to preserve their 'innocence' à la Grenze, or their dignity à la Raphael.

Some masculine philosophers express the view that there is something delicate and tender and virginal, a sort of imponderable vegetative bloom and magical quietness about the natural state of women which is preserved better by the old-fashioned fidelity to one hulking fool rather than by the new-fangled picking and choosing between a score of hulking fools, but the luck or ill-luck in this alternative depends so much upon individual peculiarities that it seems very rash to dogmatize about it.

It is true that the new liberty has made many young women profoundly unhappy. You see on many hunted, harassed, reckless, lacerated, forced gaiety as lamentable as the endearments of a worn-out who it is better to be reckless and alive than resign dead, and this modern lacerated look, wherein the virginal bloom of a woman's instinctive charm is

these pursuits with a complete indifference to considerations of good and evil.

I would like this little work to be a Devil's Hand-book for young women, or if you prefer, a Machiavelli's Breviary on the topic of 'How to be happy without having to be good', for it seems harder for most of the people I encounter to escape the unfair demands made upon them by their consciences than to resist monstrous and inhuman temptations. Most of the people whose paths I cross are perpetually being ordered by their consciences to put up at all costs with what makes them unhappy. What I am aiming at as the Devil's advocate in this book is to persuade their consciences that they owe it to the mystery of the universe and to the mystery of life to be happy at all costs, *if possible without running down*, but at any rate to be happy.

Nor need any woman exact of her man that he should notice the nice touches she puts to her house and to her person. Short of robbing him of food and fire and tobacco, short of getting him into debt, it is 'very meet and right' as the prayer-book says, that she should spend her money on this wonderful private work of art; but she must do it *for herself alone*. A man pays for it, that is enough. In paying for it he pays for the privilege of not having to notice it.

Of course when the pair are still in the exalted state of being-in-love everything that the woman has touched becomes an enchanted mystery to the man; but even on these days she, much more than he, continued lives her own life and seeing things in her own realistic way, is independent of her lover's fervent imagination.

But now that their mystical attempt to respond to the universe as one unit is at an end, now that they are what is not less interesting to be - a man enjoying himself in *his* way and a woman enjoying herself in *her* way, if she wants to be happy she must be quite unscrupulous about escaping into herself. The more she escapes into herself the better for both of them and it is much easier

to do it with only her mate and her children at her side to do it with her mother at her side! A mother has more power over a daughter than over a son, and creates a daughter's happiness. The mother does not wish to do this, but it is clear enough that if you have two creators of the same work of art under the same roof one the two will have no occupation; and this one naturally will be the younger.

A girl is happier living with almost any man who does not get drunk and beat her than with the best of mothers. There is a deep and sinister mystery about the relation between a mother and a daughter. One feels as if there were something evil, some subtle outrage to Nature, about their living together at all. A girl would be always wise to choose to live next door to her man's mother rather than under the same roof with her own, for it is better to quarrel openly and flagrantly than to be covertly and unconsciously vampirized at the very root of your identity. The mother gave. The mother taketh away. But both in this giving and this taking what is good for a son, adding to his egoism and detracting from his egoism, is deadly and fatal to a girl. The only good mothers for girls are the mothers who have the power of *letting go their hold*.

The way for a woman to be happy is to enjoy her identity as a woman to the extremest limit. Let her derive all the most subtle sensations she can from her room, from her house, from her own body and from what she wears. Let her read, not what she feels she *ought* to read but what she enjoys reading. Let her live boldly for all those little things that really thrill her; for her fabrics, her garden, her window-plants, her curtains, her chin, her favourite actors, comedians, musicians, preachers.

Let her make a great deal of the view from her windows, especially from her kitchen window. If she can enjoy these little pleasures openly and easily let her enjoy them surreptitiously, evasively, indirectly. Her life is life, not her man's, just as his life is *his* and not her's.

is one of the ultimate secrets of happiness for a man and woman, who want to go on living together when the early romance of their passion has been modified by habit, that they should drastically give up the attempt to share all their pleasures. They will only lose one thing to gain another thing; and this new thing that they will gain will be ten thousand times more evocative of happiness than the attempt to feel in cold-blood, when they have fallen back into their separate identities, the old united sensations, which, as far as the woman was concerned, were never quite as fused as the good simple male lover imagined them to be.

She is a woman. He is a man. They are not, they never can really be, 'one flesh', still less one soul. Nothing is so deadly to a woman's real natural, secret happiness—except life with her mother—than a devoted attempt to become the perfect help-mate. Why should she become the help-mate rather than he? His work, his life, his sensations are those of a man; hers those of a woman. At many points they naturally meet, and their achievements then have all the greater power because they bring to bear on those critical issues the combined magnetic force of two separate parallel streams.

What interferes with a woman's happiness more than anything else is the constant pressure of two sets of worries, her own and her man's. He, if he be wise, is always escaping into his own world. Let her do the same. Let her humour him, flatter him, encourage him, console him; but there is one thing she must never sacrifice to him, her private secret enjoyment of her own feminine sensations.

As a matter of fact, she lives much nearer to Nature than he does. The thousand and one moods of weather, the effects of daylight, of firelight, of lamp-light, of cold and heat, of the expressive shapes, groupings, atmospheres, colours and forms of the inanimate world of *things*, evoke hourly responses in her to which he is totally oblivious.

Let her never be betrayed into growing callous and indifferent to all these delicate appeals of atmosphere, to

the art of happiness makes the utmost of all the 'narcissism', all the self-love, she can possibly summon up. This is the deepest secret of all. To be profoundly happy according to Nature's intention, a woman has to feel—how shall I put it?—as if the furniture of her room were in love with her, as if all the walls and floors were enamoured of her, as if the very candle on her table 'bowed towards her', as the poet says, to 'under-peep her eyelids'; she has to feel as if the sunlight on her window-sill were her lover, as if the rain on the roof were her suitor, as if the wind in the chimney were sighing to caress her; she has to feel as if the impalpable pulse of the solid earth outside, the imponderable pressure of the divine ether above it, were both drawn in a delicious confederacy of planetary attraction towards their daughter and their darling.

What she must get into her head is—and let her pretend it if she doesn't believe it!—that every woman in the world has something *physically desirable* about her. As a matter of fact there would be no 'pretence' about it, if it were not for that self-lacerating demon, in the heart of an unhappy woman, who refuses to leave her the least semblance of desirability.

But ask Papa Karamazov about this, he who found that poor deformed village-idiot, the mother of Smerdyakov, so sweet a morsel for his wicked joy. Papa Karamazov found in fact *something desirable* about every woman in the world. It was his grand discovery, and for all his rascality it made him a happy man.

It is sheer madness and morbidity in any woman, however plain, not to give herself the thrill of feeling that she is desirable—and desirable for her body too; for the women who try to base their secret happiness on their mental gifts neither understand Nature nor themselves. Let a woman cultivate her mental gifts by all means, but when it comes to this delicious, imponderable, inexpressible happiness, which—in spite of all her worries, and all her man's worries, and all the burden of their offspring—is

the world and is loved by everything in the world. Those extraordinary feelings of rapturous happiness that come sometimes to women, when, thinking of 'something else', they suddenly see their whole life in a new perspective and feel as if it were overpoweringly lovely, have to do, not with her mind at all, but with an elemental reciprocity that exists between life itself and the feminine senses.

And let her extend this voluptuous secret life of the senses, wherein she loves herself and feels herself loved by inanimate things, into all her human encounters, whether with men or women. Every woman ought to be a bride of the universe in that same mystic sense with which nuns—who with all they renounce never renounce their essential femininity—are brides of the Mystery behind the universe; and this mystical radiance, this emanation of magical happiness that she draws from life—and in a sense from death too, for every woman is a Persephone caught up between life and death—she ought to have the power of transmitting in the subtle chthonian smile with which she greets everyone who approaches her.

A woman who understands the art of arts, the art of being a woman, will never have need to cuckold her mate with any particular man. There is not a human being who looks her in the face to whom she does not give a life-restoring drop from the sacred fount, to whom, in a psychic sense, she does not offer herself. She offers herself in her smile. She offers herself in her expression. She offers herself with every movement and with every rest from movement.

And what above all this woman offers, this woman who has learnt the oldest of all arts, the art subtler than literature, more magical than poetry, the art the lack of which in the Creator of our cosmos 'brought death into the world and all our woe, with loss of Eden', is the gift of being happy after past tragedy, with the possibility of future tragedy, and while tragedy is going on around.

This is that Narcissus...

the passing of time, as she sits sewing at her window, or by her fire, with her book on her lap, with the vague sensuousness of the mysterious well-being of a woman at rest buoying her up, like a calmly-rocking wave in an infinite sea.

The great thing to avoid is the blurring out of her terrible woman's insight into her man's weaknesses. Deceive him, deceive him, deceive him in all the great spiritual essentials, but be honest about the little things; above all about money. In the greater things duplicity is the word. By this I mean never let him guess how far you see round him, how deep you see through him, and how disillusioned you are with regard to his pathetic masculine conceit. Such 'duplicity' in reality—such is the irony of life—comes much nearer the truth than any angry outbursts you might make in merciless condemnation of his weaknesses. You are nearer to Nature than he is. Nature is feminine, just as you are and is for ever whispering her secrets into your ear. You must remember that it was men and not women who invented language, who invented the words you have to use, words that as soon as you utter them distort your feminine meaning. Your flattery of him, your humouring of him, your constant spiritual deception of him is the price he has to pay for wanting to live with a being of a different race, and then insisting that this being should talk to him in *his* tongue rather than her own. There is no need for you, either, to unburden yourself to another woman, still less to betray him to another man. Sink deep down into your own soul, and analyse not your love. Live in your own sensations. All women belong to a race far older than the race of man, and a race who have known for thousands of years what he is only beginning now to articulate with his blundering reason.

To argue with him is pure insanity. Humour him, agree with him, and think your own thoughts! It is only a desperately foolish woman, and one devoid of all pride, who goes chattering to other women about him.

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satisfy your superiority, not in trying to prove to him that you are cleverer than he is, but in seeing how far you can go in concealing from him your deeper insight. Nature has made you 'loving' enough. Nature will deal with the continuance of your 'love'. Learn from Nature another lesson, a more difficult lesson. Learn to live a double life: *the life with him*, which, if you have any penetration, must be life of a thousand spiritual deceptions, *and the life with yourself*, to which, in the nature of things, he has no clue.

Let him go on thinking in his folly that you love him for his intellect, for his character, for his strength, for his humour, for his imagination, for his good looks. What you really love him for it is wisest never to reveal to him. Nature and yourself know what it is, that stripped, pre-occupied, heart-breakingly simple man-doll, whom you catch off-guard sometimes and nearly give yourself away to him by the poignance of what you feel. But you must not give yourself away; for what he wants, unless he happens to have more of the woman in his own soul than is usual with his tribe, is not just to be loved, least of all just to be loved for his pathetic, reduced, poignant, tragic-comic identity, but to be loved with wonder and awe and reverence and admiration, feelings that come easily to you in the initial state of being-in-love, but which you are not surprised to find have extremely little to do with what makes you go on loving him.

Nor is it altogether a maternal feeling that you have come to feel for him. In those perilously sweet pythonic kisses of yours there is a vein no doubt of diffused maternal sadism. But what you feel for him day in, day out, the feeling for him that runs parallel to your own private world, parallel to that 'pleasure which there is in life and death', is something more than any maternal love. It is something for which there is no name save that tragic simple name 'the love of women' which the Psalmist declares was 'surpassed'—but peradventure he knew what he said!—by the love of his friend.

Down at the bottom of all the 'happiness' of both of them, when these two completely different creatures live together there lies this ultimate mystery, this mystery that is guarded by the woman's sacred duplicity, the fact that she loves him with a love for which there is no name, though all passion is dead, loves him, in spite of himself, for himself, but for a self of which he does not, in his masculine pride, even suspect the existence.

CHAPTER FOUR

Man with Woman

It appears that it is easier for a man to live with a woman of whom he is fond, after the glamour of first love has faded, than it is for a woman to live with a man; and this seems to be because men are more detached from Nature than women, less involved in the little things of daily life, and much more pre-occupied with matters that have nothing to do with emotional association. It must be remembered that this work is more concerned with the problem of how to be happy than with the problem as to whether we have a right, in a world like this, to be happy at all.

I have tried to touch upon this other problem—our right to be happy in an unhappy world—in my chapter about conscience, where I sought to prove that not only have we a right to be so, but a mystical obligation to be so; but just as in Machiavelli's 'Prince' the moral aspects of tyranny are deliberately subordinated to the practical problem of how to be a successful tyrant, so in this book, if it is once granted that we have a right, and even an obligation, to be happy in spite of the miseries of other entities, the discussion, based on this assumed right, cannot be repeatedly tinkering at its moral foundation. It must go ahead shamelessly with the edifice it is erecting, treating personal happiness as the supremely desirable thing, and concerned solely with the technique of attaining it and with its quality when attained.

This matter of the right of an individual soul at least

to struggle to be happy, when cases of unhappiness are constantly in its presence, is particularly applicable to the problem now before us by reason of the mysterious ways—at least from the viewpoint of the masculine consciousness—in which women, for causes obscure to the intelligence of man, seem often to cherish and foster their unhappiness as if it were a suckling babe.

But even in cases where a man's affection for his partner is deep and tender the soul within him is just as solitary a Being as the soul within her and has, apart from anything her soul may be feeling, its own private and secret relation with the universe and with the mystery behind the universe. The solemn words of Jesus to his parents remain as an eternal protest on behalf of the ultimate independence of the individual soul and they are words that bear a peculiar significance when you consider what an intense temptation it is to a woman to invade, like the in-rushing of an ocean-wave, every cranny of her man's nature, until the very centre of his inmost being seems in danger of being surrounded by the swallowing tide.

I wonder how far women realize the part played in a man's consciousness by the Fear of Life. There are of course justifications for the traditional view that women are more nervous and more fearful than men; and experience bears witness to the little obvious particular fears in a feminine existence, but what might be called the *fear-skin* of humanity is really much thinner with men than with these soft bodies and troubled nerves at their side! The dullest man for instance, has in him a thousand imaginative fears quite unknown to women. I would go so far as to say that with their realism and their never-ceasing sense of the underlying tragedy of things women are a great deal braver than men.

Men down at the bottom of their hearts are afraid of life itself. I suspect that they often have an obscure feeling quite unknown to women, of belonging to a world of ideas and theories and purposes altogether out-

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dark chaotic swirl of Nature's life-stream. With their human 'fear-skin' so much thinner than women's men are forced to surround themselves with all manner of mental swaddling-bands. Like Cæsar Augustus, who we learn from Suetonius had to swathe his body, beneath his grand armour, with rolls of flannel, every man instinctively uses his theories, his purposes, his hobbies, his ideals, down to his inmost life-illusion, as wrappings against this reality-terror which never quite leaves him.

It is this that gives a woman such power over her man; for she quickly becomes aware not only of the cracks in his world-armour, but of the ragged places in his interior swaddling-bands; and when she wants to hurt him as she does in her moments of nervous anger, she can turn on these weak spots not only her own devastating insight but a thin black jet out of the recesses of the cosmos. Moving like a phosphorescent fish in the subaqueous tides of Nature she possesses a fatal power squirting between the seams of his diver's dress this terrible fear-fluid sucked up from the ocean-floor.

As Shakespeare shows in *Macbeth* men are less prone to nervous troubles than women, but much more prone to imaginative troubles.

More women commit suicide from emotional distress than men; but it is almost always some black jet of imaginative terror squirted between the joints of rational harness that drives men to kill themselves.

Our atrocious English custom of flogging prisoners in extreme cases has, at the moment I am writing, one convict to hang himself with his shirt and to swallow a fork, whereas women condemned to a torture would have been spared these imaginative partly because their fear-skin is less thin and they padded themselves with so much protective reason partly because they abide with, and seldom forget, the basic atrocities of life itself.

Why is it that blunter, cruder, more obtuse men are able to be happier in living with a woman than

subtle brothers? Is it not because a certain vein of rough, crude brutality in their nature gives a woman the feeling—sometimes quite an erroneous feeling—that it were useless to turn upon an animal as rough-and-ready as this her deadly jet of ocean-floor secretion?

The more imaginative a man is—and all men are more imaginative than women—the more complicated will he find his life with anyone of them. In one sense his imagination gives him—as far as his personal happiness is concerned—a tremendous advantage. I refer to his power to live a double life.

Now by 'living a double life' I do not mean keeping hidden up another woman. I mean keeping hidden up *another mental life*. The more imaginative he is the more vivid this other mental life will be and the more complete escape it will be.

What hypocritical lies are passed round among us about the power of love! It may be wrong to be happy in a world like this except with the kind of sideways happiness that comes to a saint, or at any rate to someone for ever occupied in alleviating pain, but if we *have* decided to aim at happiness, it is moral cowardice not to face the situation in its starkest form.

To an extremely imaginative man—for we will drop the word 'sensitive', since in matters of money and vanity and hunger and desire we are all 'sensitive' and indeed we invariably notice that it is the most selfish people who talk most of their 'sensitiveness'—the anger of women is more terrifying than women realize. It is like an explosion from that awful sub-world of Reality against which we men are always padding ourselves like the White Knight in 'Alice through the Looking Glass', or like Cæsar Augustus going to war.

And of course the more dreadful to an imaginative man is that sight of the Valkyrie storm-flash in a woman's face, that Pantherish darkening of the pupils, that Babylonian narrowing of the eyelids, the more often will he be exposed to it. And this will be brought about n

selves. But no woman thinks she's done it herself. How can she, when she has responded with so much love and so much hate to the process of chance or destiny doing it?

Deeper down by far than anything else, in this question as to how a man is to be happy with a woman, when the state of being-in-love is over, is the matter of a man's life-fear which so naturally turns into his woman-fear.

When he listens to the outpouring of her love-hate upon every detail in life, when he contemplates the intensity of her *amor-odium fati* over what to him seem the merest bagatelles, when he recognizes in himself the heavy-witted, bewildered absent-mindedness, from which, like the denizen of a world of fantasy descending from a buoyant airship into wet salt waves, he makes his idiotic comments upon her reality, he feels as if she were confusing *him* with the wrong-doing fate she is denouncing so fiercely! It is at such times that he wonders to himself whether they would not both of them be happier if he could be her woman-friend by day, and her lover only at night.

The truth is that every woman has in her the makings of a realistic novelist, but a novelist with the imaginative art of selection left out. But why, indeed, should she select, when everything, simply *because it is there* is a matter of absorbing and infinite interest to her?

It is the same in all classes of life. You have to go to a woman if you want to get the actual pressure of some event that has transpired or is transpiring, in the full pell-mell of all its chaotic details, whereas it is to a man you go if you want that selective imaginative touch, which, by a process of selection gives the event its æsthetic impressiveness.

It is for this reason that when a man is telling you anything his woman will be for ever interrupting him; for it is an actual pain to her to hear him leave out so many of the details in his artistic desire to make a hit.

But to come to the main issue of this chapter, how best can a man, the maker and defender of ill-

completely devoid of this inner necessity to feel profound, but they know by instinct how important it is to a man; and the way for a man to retain it under her attacks is to let her think she has pricked his conceit of it, while all the while he is lying *perdu* in a pessimistic vision of things so stark and ultimate that nothing can reach him. To grow increasingly happier in life a man *must* hug the pride of his mental stoicism; but the closer he can get this abstract virtue into some relation with reality the better for him.

To be happy in this hard world he *must* think of himself as a stoical philosopher whose virtue looks for no recognition beyond the inner glow which he gets from it; but he had better keep a weather-eye open, while he indulges in this secret pride, for various revelations about life that reach him through his woman.

Bewildered though he may be by her terrible insight into that life-flood of devastating details, he *must* keep his head enough to be able to gratify her by looking more of the unmasked fool, to which in her nervous irritation with his complacency she wishes to reduce him, than he actually feels, though he does not feel *quite* comfortable. But under her troublesome details, that seem to him to contradict all philosophy, the best thing he can do is to sink down through 'reality' into what might be called 'truth'.

Reality is what appears. Truth is what our reason assures us lies behind appearances. I have recommended a pessimistic view of 'truth' as more conducive to a man's pride of thought than an optimistic 'truth', but as long as he keeps his thoughts to himself this latter will also serve.

Behind the philosophy of every masculine thinker, and this applies as much to the ones who write books as to the ones who only patronize their women in conversation lies, as my brother Theodore always says *the glory of* pride.

Those who regard such pride of tho

becomes a saint he gives up living with women, it becomes necessary to use a technique that has no formal religious precedent.

Women it is true have a 'penchant' for saints, but they also have an irresistible urge to disturb their sanctity; and the best and most modern thing to aim at, it seems to me, if you are really resolved to give up your inmost pride, is something more on the lines of Dostoievsky's Idiot, or, if you prefer, of Alyosha Karamazov. The Idiot certainly succeeded in killing his inmost pride. What at the bottom of his nature, then, really was his life-illusion? This is a hard question but it is spiritually of the greatest importance to us just here, when we are making a desperate struggle to acquire a life-illusion of our own that goes against the whole grain of our masculine nature.

The attempt we are making now is indeed one of the most perilous that a masculine soul could possibly make, as far as his happiness is concerned, and yet I do not think it would be correct to call the Idiot an unhappy person.

It were certainly easier for a man, in these sceptical times, to follow the spiritual path of the Idiot, than to make the wild and desperate clutch after Christian humility described with such tragic and beautiful passion by St. Paul in the words, 'Not I—but Christ in me.'

What you get in the Idiot is such an abysmal sense of 'the equality of all souls' in the presence of the terrible and beautiful mystery of life, that this feeling of being 'a Superior Man' as the Chinese say, or of being at any rate a much-enduring stoical man, which is what most men are conscious of, is struck by lightning at its root. What penetrated the soul of the Idiot was a constant vivid awareness of the tragic beauty of every human soul he encountered; and when, as on the occasion of that fashionable party when he broke the vase, any human group behaved in the remotest way decently he was stirred to the profoundest depths of his soul. What the Idiot seems to have felt was a *sensatio*

and mystic *rapport* with the rank and file of humanity. Indeed the feeling of being lost amid the tossed and troubled waves in the great sea of tragic human life, *may* bring with it some strange unlooked-for ecstasy of *identification with All Souls* and with their pitiful destiny, just as Alyosha fell down with rapturous sobs and kissed the earth, in spite of the fact that his friend's corpse has begun to stink; but in spite of such isolated moments of chance-sent rapture there is a serious danger that you will soon just begin to drift at random through life, trusting to your inspired moments to thrill you and keep you going, and then suddenly find yourself, a besotted slave of some mania, some madness, some vice, some drug, some obsession, followed by misery and unhappiness, to which if you had retained your moral pride, and had been still practising your self-righteous stoicism, you would never have submitted.

But since we are considering the problem as to how a man can live most happily with a woman why should we not ask the question: 'Why can't he imitate women's attitude to life?' Women very rarely indulge themselves in pride of thought or in pride of stoical self-control. They often pity themselves as the victims of chance or fate or of some malignant and selfish man; but they seldom think of themselves with complacency as philosophic stoics.

And this freedom from the pride of virtue saves them from the misery of remorse. They don't feel remorse, because they are not concerned with the building up of an interior mental philosophy, the disturbance of which causes pain.

But if the Idiot's freedom from moral pride and Alyosha's freedom from moral pride are deep spiritual secrets, why should not women's freedom from this particular kind of egoism be an equally subtle clue? I think it *is* such a clue; only it is extraordinarily difficult for a man to make use of more than a very little of it, and even that only intermittently.

If you watch women closely you will notice how they

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themselves 'entire' and 'all-of-a-piece' into the particular emotion they are expressing. They have their reserves of course; and they are, by inescapable necessity, presses and deceivers; but what they reserve is only *more of the same emotion* that they express, or some hidden store of a directly opposite emotion. Their reserve is in fact a reserve of themselves—of *more* of themselves—not, as with men, the reserve of an ego that is lying back on the pride of its moral values and on the superiority of its mental vision.

But what would be the effect upon a woman if a man really did set himself to destroy his secret masculine pride of thought? It is hard to say—certainly such a course, whether he followed the way of the saints, or the way of the Tao, or the way of Dostoievsky's Idiot would take from her her greatest weapon for making him unhappy; but on the other hand if he removed her power of making him unhappy, he would also be denying her the greatest relief and release she has for her tense and vibrant nervous irritation.

This irritation really comes from the fact that deep in her heart she wants from you *the companionship of a woman* combined with the stimulus and security of your being a man.

On the whole, for you *are* a man, it is safest, since you are more anxious to be happy than to make subtle spiritual experiments to get as much comfort as you can out of your stoical pride of thought. After all it is this pride of thought that lies behind most of the progress such as it is, that our race has won in its struggle with Nature. Women, being so intimate a part of nature and indeed a microcosm of the great mysterious ocean in which a man is steering his raft; and it may well be the Christian and Taoistic tricks of throwing overboard his pride of reason and his pride of stoical morality, kind of cosmic betrayal of man's proper destiny.

It is certainly a giving up of that essential detachment that isolation in the fortress of his lonely thinking-

which has made him all the way down history the grand Observer of Nature, and the grand Meddler with Nature. Granting then, that if you want to be happy with a woman it is safer to remain the egoistic philosopher and moralist you were born, and that Heraclitus and Socrates and Epictetus and Epicurus and Goethe and Nietzsche were born, rather than to play any subtle Oriental tricks with some dark inhuman secret of humility. But all the same it does still remain that the deeper you force your pride of thought and your pride of virtue to sink down out of sight into your soul the less you will suffer unhappiness and the less you will quarrel with your woman.

But the man is unwise who—because he is struck by the tidal recurrences and reversions of his woman's loves and hates and because he finds in her no sort of moral standards resembling his own—comes to the conclusion that women have nothing in them that corresponds to his morality. He has forgotten that beautiful Athenian word for an intellectual paramour which is the feminine counterpart of the Homeric word comrade. Women's natures are not, as various masculine philosophers have erroneously argued, composed entirely of maternal psychology and courtesan psychology. There is still in all of them an indestructible element of brooding romance, or rather of that unconscious passivity, hushed, inscrutable, virginal, inarticulate, that their first lover, moving like the creative spirit 'on the face of the waters', troubled with the reciprocity of love.

It is this same mystic element in their nature, only with a new quality added, that returns upon them, deep as life itself, when they are nursing their first child.

But though men catch the virginal romance of this feminine mystery in the face of the young girl they love, and again in face of the mother of their child, there is something in this thing that is different from mere innocence and different from mere maternity. It partakes of the mystery of that strange brooding expectation that

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are aware of sometimes in Nature, when we seem to certain aspects of her life unawares and offguard. Now there exists something of this hushed submental activity, where you feel that her thoughts are as vague and obscure, and as deep too, as physical feelings, in any woman, and it is from this unfading element in the very thing that so roused his romantic interest the first, that a man, who wishes to get the full intense flavour of his privilege of spending days and nights with his strange Being, must draw the living water of his life. For there is a mystery here more evasive than all her courtesan provocations and all her maternal obsessions. And it is the thing in her that neither her momentary dangers can touch, nor her possessiveness dispel. It is something which the passing of the years has no power to diminish.

But it is a sacred thing, perhaps the most sacred of all, and it has always to be approached by the man who recognizes it over a bridge as narrow and enchanted as that which led to the Castle of the Grail.

But this mystic passivity, which is the cause of all sexual romance, and which, for a man with any will-power in his imagination, can never lose its appeal, is not the only quality in women that belongs neither to the courtesan nor the mother. There is also a woman's psychic sympathy. This is that large, calm, soothing restorative power, like the cool stone rim of a fairy fountain, for the sake of which men in all times have come to a certain type of woman. And they have always found what they sought, were she a cup-bearer serving drinks or a wrinkled crone stirring a pot on the fire or a bayadère at rest after her dance, or an Aspasia pondering the secrets of human life. They have found the woman who can be a companion. A man is aware of this mystery, this sympathy as deep as Nature herself, in the most unlikely quarters. He can feel it in the face of a barmaid at the counter, in the face of a beggar on the street, in the look of a patient shop-girl, in the pres-

of a great lady weary with the handling of huge assemblies of guests, in the hushed quiescence of an overworked charwoman.

It is not the response of the courtesan, nor is it the response of the mother. It is something deeper. ~~It is~~ organically feminine than either of these. An old ~~one~~ can display it, who is totally devoid of amorous ~~feeling~~ ~~and~~ entirely free from maternal emotion. It is the sympathy of the eternal Companion, of the ~~eternal~~ Helper, of the everlasting *Hetaira*. It is the ~~thing~~ ~~that~~ makes a man call a casually-encountered woman 'mother'. In a certain sense it is the sister-quality, but the ~~quality~~ quality with something added. Almost all ~~men~~ ~~have~~ it and so do almost all prostitutes.

And when a man comes, for understanding ~~and~~ ~~in~~ clairvoyant insight into his special needs, to a ~~woman~~ in this mood it would be absurd to say she is devoid of 'morality'. She is devoid of his pompous ~~logical~~ ~~morality~~ but she has something deeper, more ~~feminine~~ ~~and~~ instinctive and far more precious. She has her ~~own~~ ~~system~~ system—though it is not at all what a ~~man~~ ~~means~~ by a 'system'—of deep social values. It would be ~~in~~ ~~the~~ quality a too pedantic air to call it the ~~quality~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~man~~ and yet there does adhere to it a ~~deep~~ ~~touch~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~

intense and quivering magnet-needle of a real encounter of electric currents her whole nature vibrates in response.

Who are the human souls who answer with alert intelligence to every great new mystic and æsthetic idea? The souls of women. Not only Jesus and Mahomet and Confucius and Buddha, but Henry James and Joyce and Proust and Dorothy Richardson will be found to have their first disciples among women. The more purely logical systems of thought from Spinoza to Einstein may suit men better than women, but I doubt if any men-disciples were quicker to catch the significance of such explorers of new territory as Goethe and Wordsworth and Blake and Carlyle and Nietzsche, than these great men's mothers and sisters and wives and sweethearts.

Women may be less on the alert about new schools of sculpture and architecture and painting, but it seems to me that they make up by far the larger part of the audiences for new literature and new music.

And who are the people ready to listen most intently to any really exciting and critical illuminations that average men have? Always women! And this is because each particular man with any originality is far too self-centred to have leisure for the thoughts of other men.

Any man really concerned with his deeper mental happiness must constantly make a clean sweep of all the little pin-pricks of his life with his mate and concentrate on those impersonal issues, to do with life in general, where his reactions will be quite different from hers, and where to analyse hers will be for him like the reading of a thrilling book; for compared with the life of a bachelor the life of a man who lives with a woman is twice as rich, twice as complicated, twice as interesting. 'More interest, more suffering,' you will say, and this is true; but the suffering in question, if the torture of jealousy does not enter, is nothing compared with the imaginative terrors and morbid manias that a man escapes when between him and the fearfulness of the cosmos there revolves this *other* disturbing and distracting stellar system. All life

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I have already indicated three mental acts which are of great use to a human soul when the misery of the 'outward' assails it. The plunge into the darkness of the mystery behind life was the first of these and I named it the Ichthian act.

The second, which I named the act of De-carnation, was the trick by which you imagine your soul as something separate from your body, holding your body as if by a leash; while the third of these mental processes, which I called the Panergic act, was a vigorous grasping by the mind of all those primitive elemental pleasures which make life most tolerable to you.

But when your woman, as is bound to happen sometimes, when her nerves are on edge, sets herself to make you unhappy, or to pulverize your happiness with her unhappiness, I have yet another psychic device up my sleeve which may serve your turn better than any of the foregoing. This I call the 'In-spite-of' act; and if you get into the habit of forcing yourself to make it when things are at the worst you will get great help and comfort.

The 'In-spite-of' act is a desperate up-springing of your inmost soul, as if from the very pit of your stomach, in which you challenge the evils that surround you, insisting in this case your partner's bitter tongue, and them, in the strength of a Being possessing an autocratic power.

This interior Being, in spite of what it is suffering, still cry, 'I am happy,' while its world of familiar things cracks and sways and topples. It is a battle-cry, this 'in-spite-of' act, rising up from your navel. You utter it as if—and this is satisfactory to your deepest self-respect—actually the ideal stoic philosopher who can *pavidus* while the *orbis terrarum* crashes about nothing. 'In-spite-of' act asks nothing, desires nothing. It just asserts your own solitary will on resistance and resolved to be cheerful at

best of this proud act of the soul is that it ~~brings~~ ^{brings} together with everything 'out-ward'. It ~~does not~~ ^{does not} ~~bring~~ ^{bring} you of your little pleasures. It does not ~~bring~~ ^{bring} the soul from your body; it utters its ~~de~~ ^{de} solitary 'Let there be Happiness!' as if it were the centre and circumference of everything that is.

But since, even while you are engaged in this ~~im-~~ ^{im-}perate act of the soul, you behold your ~~annoyed~~ ^{annoyed} annoying partner before you, and are forced to ~~hear~~ ^{hear} to her scathing words, it is best to yield completely to her in outward semblance. Yield, I say, and ~~again~~ ^{again} yield! Give her the satisfaction—why not?—of thinking that she has hurt you to the heart, that you are wounded and defenceless, that you are humiliated, stripped, exposed.

The pleasure you derive from deceiving her in this—for your humiliation from your own secret point of view covers a thaumaturgic triumph—will give you such an interior glow that you will feel an intense wave of tenderness towards her. She also will feel the glow of victory, will feel that she has punished her boy-philosopher sufficiently and this feeling will evoke in her a corresponding rush of tenderness for you.

Thus the trouble between you will melt away and a lovely harmony will ensue, a harmony that, like so many other forms of human happiness, will be rooted and grounded in deception.

Stern advocates of what is called 'truth at all costs' will utter a violent protest at the line I am taking, but it must be remembered that in a world like ours—a world so largely created by the various human thought-bubbles that we name 'life-illusions'—it often happens that a deception leaves us really closer to the essential truth of things than this ferocious and misleading honesty.

The truth at all costs is desirable enough in Science where human nature is not involved, but in human relations, especially in the relations between men and women, it is better, and even in a profound sense more 'honest', to accept certain deceptions as inevitable.

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man to be happy with a woman, he must get into his head at the start that she cares nothing particular kind of morality and nothing for his particular kind of reason. When she is good it is because it is because yours are involved, and when she is not, you will say, why is it that there are so many emotions and *her* values are involved.

Now the fear of women for men is a very different thing from the fear of men for women, because it has a subtle pleasure in it. The physical hurt in the original act of masochism and sadism radiate to infinity. plays its part in this subtle pleasure, and there is also the satisfaction that *any* submission when touched with a vein of irony is able to produce. But however much pleasure may be mingled with a woman's fear of her man, the point is that good, docile wives are still actuated by secret emotions and values totally different from a man's reason.

And it is her susceptibility to emotion that a man wants to be happy with her must constantly exploit. is the only way to get round her, the only way to understand *her* inner system of values. A man must excite in her the emotion of fear—an emotion pleasurable to her—or he must appeal to her emotion of love.

To try to excite her pity is a mistake; and here upon a blunder that men are constantly making themselves are led to be very tender to their women. they pity her, for pity is the most reasonable of feelings, in fact the inverse side of justice; but something annoying to a woman's nerves to pity the man she lives with, and this increases rather than diminishes her bad hum-

No, if you want to be happy with her the only way is to excite her emotion of fear—which is a much pleasanter thing *than your fear of her*—or to excite her emotion of love.

Never try to move her to pity, that inverse of justice, and never appeal to your own idea of the difference between right and wrong. Arnold Bennett says no man ever made himself and his woman happy by trying to base their life on justice, and I say it is almost as great a mistake to base it on pity.

Appeal to love or appeal to fear; for these are the motive-forces she understands. Like the black ashes of a burnt ledger-book she will fling to the winds all other considerations; and you will find that you have only made matters worse by introducing such irrelevancies.

And when I say 'appeal to her love' I don't mean make cold-blooded rational speeches about it, for *that* will annoy her worst of all, as an appeal translated into *your* language and therefore becoming totally false.

You must, even in the midst of your sulkiness and her anger, 'make the motion' of love, whether you feel it or not, and in 'broken speech and your whole function suiting in form to this conceit' implore her to forgive you and be friends again.

The reason why women who have quarrelled with their men and left them feel themselves tempted to a vindictiveness more cruel than the grave, is because in that place within their flesh and blood where they 'possessed' you, and loved and hated their 'possession', there is now a ghastly and hurting emptiness. They can no longer feel pulsing within them what they love and what they fear. They can only feel undying vindictiveness towards that emptiness in themselves which is now *all that you are*.

All men feel that it is absurd of women to have such contempt for men's pride of morality and pride of philosophical stoicism, for they feel that women have no idea to what brutal and callous lengths men *could* go if this pride of virtue in them did not hold them back!

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what mood is it that these stoical men do sometimes allow themselves as a substitute for the physical pleasure that their morality forbids. Well! *they sulk*. It is clear that no philosopher dealing with the problem of happiness can deny that women get a definite measure out of the expression of anger—'Anger,' says the masculine proverb, 'is short madness'; but to women is a balm, a nepenthe, a release, a relief, a divine comfort to their nerves and a consummation of all their oppressed feelings.

It is a sign of a happy life! A really unhappy woman is beyond the panacea of getting angry. But a man's sulking is a very different thing. He derives no pleasure from it; it is a release of nothing; it is a balm for nothing. To sulk is one of the meanest of all masculine ways. It plagues your woman much more than an outburst of anger; but you must not suppose it puzzles her or is calculated to bring her round; for it is on a precise par with the behaviour of that simple boy-child to whose mental proportions she loves reducing you.

But there is, I believe, no effort of the will that man, the great Moralist, can possibly make, equal to the effort of breaking the ice of his own sulkiness before it has become solid enough to bear his weight. It is in matters like this that a philosopher really can do something to increase the happiness of his woman and himself. Never argue with her, unless in the spirit of a chess champion playing with a beautiful savage. And never sulk, when—as you ought to have foreseen—would inevitably happen—she gets the better of you and humiliates you.

The great thing on both sides, if a man and a woman are to be happy together, is for them each to be true to the limit. So many of our modern intellectual *ménages*, if an association can be called a *ménage* though as huffer-mugger as a circus-camp, are rendered unhappy because the man thinks that it is unintellectual to be masculine, and the woman thinks it is unintellectual to be feminine. They struggle to be the distorted victims

intellectual modernity and intellectual sincerity, when all that is needed to make them happy is a taste of Helen of Troy's Egyptian Nepenthe—in other words, a drop of that primeval Duplicity which Nature herself pours like a blessed oil upon her sexes.

Let the women therefore give way freely to all those furious tempers that she calls her 'nerves' and that are the tax humanity has to pay for the complicated organism that brings it into being. And let the man indulge himself without scruple or hesitation in his pride of being crafty and much enduring.

Let every woman, in other words, be the natural Penelope *she* is, and every man the natural Odysseus *he* is.

I hinted in my last chapter that a woman's happiness in life depends first on her creative atmosphere making and secondly on her success in the delicate art of swallowing her mate whole; and I suggested at the same time that if a man is cunning enough to slip off into his own secret mental world when this swallowing process is going on he will not mind the feeling of being reduced to boyhood again in order to be small enough to vanish within that Lamia-skin.

I have often thought what a pity it is that the penetrating ideas of D. H. Lawrence about the relations between men and women should be confined to their state when they are still in the first condition of 'being-in-love'. My own problem in this book is quite different; for I have to indicate the technique by which Lady Chatterley and her *tour de force* Lover can be happy together when those first bewildering adjustments are over. With regard to that early state of 'being-in-love' I hold my peace, for a super-happiness enters into *that*, which is totally beyond philosophic analysis.

Even Socrates, in Plato's famous Symposium, needed the word of the sibyl before he could describe that mystic union.

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have a notion, however, that certain portions of my technique will have their value for young people who are 'in the company' but have not yet risked the plunge; I am the bolder in saying this because I feel that *nothing*, a little anyway of the ideal unity the boy is conscious of is not as completely shared by his more realistic companion as he imagines. She instinctively takes colour and her cue from his ideas and she is not less occupied and bemused than he; but being a woman she 'keeps her head', as Shakespeare makes Juliet do, and never quite loses her grasp upon the practical aspect of affairs.

If a man has not the airy conscience of a Don Juan—and the ironical thing is that almost all women deep in their hearts, owing I suppose to their innate lack of masculine morality, have a secret admiration for this irresponsible rogue—he may well regard it as a tragic thing that his natural lust for the sweetness of femininity should thus land him in a situation so fraught with perils of making love to the incredible yieldingness of an enchanted body, only to discover—when he comes to live with this body—that he has landed himself with a personality ten times more belligerent than he is, is a startling shock to most young men.

What he loved was girlhood in the abstract, or beauty in the abstract, but what is now bent on possessing him, body and soul, is a mysterious and strange Being, whose ways are not *his* ways, neither her thoughts *his* thoughts.

Let modern methods of liberation go as far as they may, there is one thing they cannot liberate a girl from, and that is her woman's nature; and just as this nature exists under the most fashionable and courtly attire, so does it exist under the most Bohemian disarray.

Had Bill Sikes not murdered his Nancy, had he been a little less of a callous brute, that young lady would not have confined her possession of him to the possession of a few of his trade secrets.

What then is the 'possessed' male to do? *That* is the rub. The greatest obstacle to a man's happiness with a woman is the accumulated weight of all the little *contre-temps* of everyday life, for, since a woman takes these things twice as hard as a man, he not only has to bear whatever weight of vexation they would cause him if he lived alone, but a good share of the far heavier weight they bring down upon her.

Well! the only thing for him to do is to repress all real deep anxious concern over her special feminine tribulations. If he yielded to this his own life-happiness would not be worth an owl's pellet. Nor in his wretchedness would his woman pity him, because since she has the power of being worried to death one moment and full of radiant good spirits the next, she instinctively feels that rage against the little worries of life and a lively zest for the little pleasures of life are both of the essence of life; and certainly the cosmos would not pity him. In fact, he would have crossed the No Man's Land from his own emotional trench to the woman's only to lose *his* protective weapons and not be able to use hers.

Next to the little daily annoyances, what is most disturbing to a man's happiness under these conditions is the problem of other people—particularly of other women. He is jumpy and suspicious about her attitude to these other women, whether relatives or otherwise, and she observing his suspiciousness grows, by natural contrariness, more recklessly herself than before. Watching her in his furtive ambassadorial way, he will be tempted to bring to bear upon her least nervous reaction, her least emotional spasm, the whole camel's load of men's grievances against women since the beginning of the world. He will mutter to himself, 'They must have blood; they must and *will* have blood!' And he will watch her so closely that all her free spontaneous sallies, for and *against* these other women—sallies which it is her nature to utter 'for and against' everything in the world—appear to him in the sinister light of a demand for blood.

But what is he to do? She *does* seem to him to be coaxing out of him every detail she can get about these other women, their looks, their ways, their habits, their weaknesses. She seems driven on by that mysterious psychic yearning that Dostoievsky disclosed in his *Aglaiä*; to get as near as possible to these women; to get to the point of embracing them; to get to the point of flowing like a mist round their inmost identity.

Well! what is his attitude to be towards these feminine peculiarities? Is he to hunt them down, as Strindberg did, shooting his malicious arrows at them before their white tails can vanish into their burrows?

Or is it conducive to his happiness to take the larger, more generous, more indulgent attitude, the attitude, in fact, that might be called Shakespearean? It seems to me that he will be rewarded for this magnanimous view of things—even at the risk, as Pascal might put it, of sprinkling himself with holy water till he gets stupid, by not only feeling tenderer towards her than is possible when he is watching her like an inspired bed-bug, but by remaining sensitive to that magical charm of her femininity which the particular insight I have alluded to tends to underrate.

What we must recognize is that this Being at his side has burnt her ships in committing herself to him in a more tragic sense than he has any conception of. He must realize that she has given herself to him—below all their quarrels—to an extent that has a terrible finality, a finality far beyond the implication of anything she says or does. He must realize that the miraculous power within her of bringing children out of Limbo into mortal existence is something that—whether she uses it or not—sinks their relation to each other *as far as she is concerned* into an under-tide of startling and dreadful mystery, wherein, as if through a crack in a great weir, the waters of death mingle with the waters of life. And thus it comes about that if she finds he is deceiving her with another woman something happens in the under-world of her secret life

to which he can never get the real clue; no! not if he reason with her for a thousand years!

She may be as 'modern' as you can please in the rational ideas of our scientific age. Something there is in the mystery of Nature that refuses to be modernized; and to that something she is closer than all the philosophers in the world.

It is not his desire for another woman that will ruin their happiness. It is not even his possession of another woman. It is her discovery that he has deceived *her*. For these reasons if he wishes to go on living with her and retain his happiness there is only one thing to do and that is to confess. It is natural and right that he should deceive her in a thousand ways; but he runs a terrible risk if he deceives her over another woman.

It is, after all, the Strindberg in him, not the Shakespeare, the malicious half-feminine man, not the indulgent imaginative man, who now says to himself, 'she must have blood!' But whether it be 'blood' or lavender-water, if you want to be happy with your One-of-all you must offer up something to her that belongs to the other woman; not necessarily her whole wardrobe, but a ribbon or two, a shoe-lace, a safety-pin, a powder-box, a glove. You will feel remorse. You will feel a scoundrel. You will also feel a fool. But it is better to be a shameless fool in Paradise than a discreet and honourable gentleman in Hell.

I would not bid you to offer on the altar even this little pin-prick of the other woman's life unless it were absolutely essential for your happiness to do so. But after all what the other woman loses is only this thimbleful of pride, whereas if you go on letting your mate feel you are deceiving her you are doing something to her soul in a dimension of terrible mystery totally beyond your plumb-line's fathoming. It is curious to note the impersonal malice that men feel towards women and what intense malicious joy they take in dissecting their frailties. If you analyse to the bottom your scrupulous pr

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one woman from another woman I believe you will find it often springs not from a sense of honour at all but from pure maliciousness. It isn't that you love this other woman so much; but that you derive a wicked joy from not giving your girl the witch's pleasure of sticking pins into the wax image of her rival!

There is a vague notion in most men's minds that it removes personal bitterness and makes things happier all round if they mentally vent their spleen on *Women in General* when their mate torments them. As a student of the greatest of all arts I regard this method as a grave mistake. By far the better way is to allow yourself in your mind to indulge in a savage orgy of thinking of your woman as the worst and wickedest of all women.

Give yourself up to thinking of everything of you that annoys you most. And then—when you have gone to the limit—swing round to the opposite extreme and think of her as you love her best, as you admire her most, all her faults forgotten. By indulging yourself in the first of these extreme views you will satisfy your suppressed indignation and you will feel a delicious reaction in her favour just as if you had struck her into insensibility. And then when you build up her image again out of all the elements you love best in her, it will be as if she had died and come to life. The great thing is to assume in the depths of your mind that it is impossible for her to change but always possible for you to change. Be an absolute fatalist about her, and a believer in absolute free will in regard to yourself. This is a secret attitude that will cause a warm proud glow to irradiate your stoic mind, and it will make you as indulgent to her as if she were some elemental force of Nature that must be accepted without question.

And as day follows day never let yourself cease vividly aware of all the little material adjustments makes that are so necessary to your comfort.

I will not go so far as to say that the orderly sense and rhythmic harmony of all these little things

Man with Woman

what give a man's mind the ~~hermit-bachelor~~ enjoy the pride of his detachment, ~~for these are the~~ hermit-bachelors who do their ~~own work in their~~ fashion, and do it, too, with a fresh ~~and~~ that makes of these things a religious ~~ritual~~ enhances rather than lessens the ~~detached~~ thought.

Though women get such a deep creative ~~pleasure~~ from their 'atmospheric' effects, they are ~~too~~ the whole thing to be able to derive that particular ~~pride~~ pride in what they are doing that men enjoy. ~~They take~~ these things in such a 'grown-up' manner and they ~~take~~ them so much for granted that a man is led to wonder ~~in~~ amazement at the sight of what to him seems mere ~~trivial~~ and mere play being made into such an organic necessity.

But if he is to be happy in the presence of all this, ~~if~~ he is to keep his self-respect in the presence of all ~~this~~, the only thing for him to do is to sink deeper and deeper into his own secret world.

And she herself, her innate femininity contemplated from the detached standpoint of his free mind, becomes one of the chief elements in this secret world!

Their first rapturous epoch of love-making over, if the man is to be happy he must aim at increasing, quickening, and for ever stimulating that magical lust, half-sensual and half-psycho, which a woman's body and the flickering expressions on a woman's face have the power of exciting in him.

It is a great mistake to suppress in his secret mind his attraction to the other women he casually encounters. The thing to do is to use every passing glimpse he may snatch of these other longed-for caskets of mystery to enhance diffused satisfaction in the one at his side. She is his 'bird in the hand', and he is a poor philosopher and one with a miserably weak imagination, who cannot but ~~enjoy~~ day, and night after night, enjoy this ~~bird in the hand~~ as a living embodiment of all the ~~birds in the hand~~ which so attract him.

the grand secret of a man's continuous happiness and alive. For her sake he has isolated himself from his relatives and friends, for her sake he has compromised with his morality, with his philanthropy, with his reward. He has got this Microcosm of Nature at his disposal, at his mercy, at his pleasure, and for the infinite enjoyment of his imaginative senses. This immodest book is, if you will, a Devil's Handbook of Happiness, and Machiavelli's Breviary of the Passing Hours. Let a man, therefore, see to it that when he makes love to his mate he finds a substitute for the old rapture of Platonic fusion in a new rapture of satyrish divergency. To get the full happiness of dallying with her and enjoying her he were wise to merge the identity of the form he knows so well into an impersonal 'Imago' of the Eternal Feminine. He has suffered from her lack of his kind of morality; let him now take full advantage of this. His innate idealism has always been a trouble to her, disturbing the practical sagacity of her life.

Well! Let him cast away this idealism where he makes love to her and exploit her abysmal indifference to these nieeties. He may be sure of one thing. It is only in books that the best of women are shocked by satyrish sensuality. The best of women offer their bodies with sympathetic indifference as a sweet sacrifice to every kind of sensuality in their mate. And no triumph of the life-spirit over the death-spirit is greater than for a couple who have once been lovers to remain satyr and oread right on to the verge of old age.

A man for whom his 'old girl' when her youthful bloom is gone is still 'Girlhood in the Abstract', is the master adept in the Eleusinian Mysteries of love.

But I have left the uttermost secret of a man's happiness with his woman to the end of this chapter. Para

with those feelings in her when she reduces his tall form to a size that she can hold between her hands and possess with her lips and her breasts and her whole physical being, is the unutterable tenderness that suffuses the man's nature when he sees her familiar form and face under certain particular aspects. Especially is this true of the moments when he catches her asleep. Indeed many times when he detects upon her face a certain wistful and virginal expression he feels towards her *as if she were asleep*. In other words he catches the frail pulse-beat of her essential and heart-breaking femininity as if it hovered between life and death, as if this incalculable and equivocal changeling of Nature were suspended between the poignance of what the loss of her would be and the poignance of her strange impossible livingness!

In this whole matter of a man's happiness *à deux* when the state of 'being-in-love' is over, the strangest thing is the obscure and unconscious depth of his hidden dependence upon her. *This dependence upon her resembles the dependence of all the men 'who eat bread upon the earth' on the elements that feed them.*

It is something that gives to a man's conscious happiness a deep unconscious foundation.

Against this background his happiness grows and flourishes, but the tragedy is that his awareness of it so often does not come *till he loses her*. To be fully happy with her, then, he had better constantly imagine what life would be without her. For without being aware of it the tendrils and fibres, the stalks and filaments of his organic life have sunk so deep into that soft, tender, sympathetic, but at the same time disturbing and troubling soil, that they have rooted themselves there.

His real feeling for her has become so all-penetrating and all-diffused as to be unrecognizable. One of the most profoundly pessimistic things ever uttered by a poet was uttered by Matthew Arnold in speaking of the divine concealment of what might conceivably be the secret of our life.

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The guide of our dark steps a triple veil
Between our senses and our sorrow keeps,
Has sown with thousand passages the tale
Of grief, and eased us with a thousand sleeps.
And this exactly answers to what I am now saying:
or if we were not distracted by the thousand and one
little stabs we get from her diurnal tongue how should
we not realize more often that terrible possibility under-
lying it all that one day this soft strange earth into which
our roots have sunk may be taken from us by death?
Nor is it any wonder that, as time goes on, our con-
scious happiness grows to be more and more dependent
on the unconscious happiness of having this woman
our side.

As I have hinted a man is strangely detached from
Nature; and deep in his heart lies a fear of Life beyond
the comprehension of any woman.

But holding a woman by night and by day between
him and Life, he is protected from this underlying fear.
He is like a frightened infant who has got back into the
snug 'cowry-shell' of inviolable safety from which he was
driven forth at the cutting of his navel-string. He is free
to be happy now in all the ways most natural to him.

Although sublimely unaware of this, his proud detach-
ed thoughts can take their restorative flights, can make
what I have pedantically called his Ichthian and Panergi-
acts of resistance to misery, in beautiful freedom from the
assaults of the Fear of Life which so troubled his solita-
youthful days. And all that he endures from her sha-
dow is an essential part of his protection! He v-

say, 'Life is more real to me now. It was only half-
before.' And what he means is that the fear of
which dogged his bachelor steps with unspeakable hor-
just because of his mental detachment from Nature,
now been warded off from him in some inscrutable
He thinks to himself, 'I was lured on by her satiny
to take this creature to my bosom; and now I am se-
by her serpent tongue and sucked down alive into

Lamia-maw,' but even while such thoughts cross his mind he finds it pleasanter, easier, more natural to him to think his proud thoughts, to live in his proud secret world, than it was before he met her.

And this is because he is no longer face to face in his helpless masculine detachment, with the chaotic ocean of life.

That satiny body, those tender ways, that terrible tongue, are now between him and Life. And his protection is the more assured because this Being who now lies between him and Nature is herself a microcosm of Nature, armed with Nature's cruellest claws, as well as dowered with her most magical allurements.

Our 'Pilgrim and Sojourner' is therefore free to think his sublime thoughts and nourish his moral pride and indulge his moral scruples and practise—as long as it does not mean giving away money—his ascetic ideals; but he is only free to do this in the large magnanimous leisure of his liberated soul because between him and Nature there is now *another Nature*, because between him and the Battle of Life there is now a Battalion of Belligerency, ten times more courageous, than he is.

But all this advantage to the man in question is not attained without loss to someone. One of the wickedest laws of Nature seems to be that it is hard for one soul to gain even a spiritual advantage without some measure of loss incurred by another.

And who are they who pay the price of this new freedom for the man to assert himself and realize his identity? They are his friends! Nothing is more noticeable than the way a man's personality and his glowing conceit of it grow and increase after he has lived for some time with his woman. She may attack him fiercely when they are alone, but in relation to the external world—especially in relation to his friends—she pumps pride into him from a boundless ocean of magnetic sympathy till he acquires a power to assert his humours, his opinions, his tastes, that sometimes becomes preposterous.

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And his old cronies don't know what to make of it; and when his family learn at last to treat him with becoming respect. He was airily egoistic before, but now his friends find his egoism a much graver, heavier, and more solidly rooted thing. He had his happy and unhappy moods before, but now he seems to assert his personality from the hidden ground of some reserve of force that renders him, not pompous perhaps, but inviolably assured.

All his little personal ways and peculiarities, all his quirks and his crochets, seem to have received some sort of authoritative seal that renders them sacred; and whereas before he had to take the world as it came, the world has now to take *him* as he comes.

Aspects of his nature that he had never dared to display before he now not only boldly displays, but obviously glories in them. It is as if he walked and talked from above the support of an invisible body beneath him. And there is an invisible body beneath him. Under him is the support of an invisible body beneath him. Under him is the everlasting lap! His mental pride in his opinions, that profound and perpetual cause of happiness to him, is doubled. And yet these are the very opinions that daily melt into thin air under the touch of the realistic tongue at his side.

His friends can no longer afford to treat him in the old way as a half-man, to be made little of, to be pushed casually about, to be fooled and disregarded and laughed at. 'There is no arguing with him,' they say. 'He has changed. He thinks he is Someone now.' She has spoken to him.

But what in reality has happened is this. For the time in his life the poor man has been given the privilege to round off his personality to its full circle. With between him and the great outer chaos he has been allowed to circle at leisure on his orbit until he has taken himself the form of a round opaque impregnable

It was a woman who gave him his first birth. A woman who has given him his second birth. He is a twice-born man.

In conclusion let me say this. What any man, finding his life difficult with a woman, were wise to do, if he cares for his happiness or hers, is to use to the limit all the measure of moral pride that Nature has given him. Let him put aside all spiritual experiments in humility, whether Christian or otherwise, till the waters are less stormy. What the waves need just now is the oil of his masculine pride of self-control!

For, whatever happens, he must never under any circumstances get angry with her. It is true that his anger is what, consciously or unconsciously, she longs to excite, and it is true that if the explosion did come there might possibly follow a warm and tearful reconciliation; but what she gains in this, and what they both gain in the resultant reconciliation, are not worth the risk of his giving up the particular thing in his deepest soul that in the long run establishes their happiness on its firmest foundation.

The reader must remember that this book is concerned with the technique of human happiness rather than with the problem of how to be nobler and more spiritual than we are; and what I feel is, that in the creation of such a technique while it is necessary to take many weapons from the armoury of God, it is also necessary to take a few from the armoury of the Devil. In other words if you want to be happy with a girl you must, at the very bottom of your soul, reconcile your conscience to be being both good and bad.

The moral unction in a man that helps him to keep his temper and answer gently when his woman is scolding, is not a wholly noble thing. It is an ambiguous quincunx, compounded of one part pity, one part reason, and three parts pride.

But, such as it is, it is in harmony with his nature just as for her to give full rein to her anger and full rein to her love, is in harmony with hers.

Secretly they will often both yearn to change each other's nature or to get back to that mystical fusion which

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existed, or at least which they imagined existed, when they were first in love; and, of the twain, I think it is usually the woman who makes the most violent efforts to change the inmost identity of the other. But it is all wrong! The whole meaning, interest, and reward, the glory and tragedy of their association, is now that he should be a man to the limit, and that she should be a woman to the limit, but a man and a woman whose happiness is for ever being renewed by the building of eternally new bridges over an everlasting gulf.

CHAPTER FIVE

W o r k s a n d D a y s

I WOULD like this little book on the 'Art of Happiness' to be of such a nature that its main gist could be understood by a person who existed three thousand years ago and also by a person who will exist three thousand years hence; nor is this a fantastic or presumptuous desire.

It is a legitimate philosophic implication, a hope that I have, for good or ill, got down to some eternal recurrence in our human situation.

Consider for example a line that with trifling modifications returns again and again throughout Homer's Odyssey:

"asmeni ek thanatio philous olessantes etairous"

'Glad to have escaped death, though we had lost our dear companions.'

Now this simple and deep sigh of relief is expressive of what should be, and what generally is, apart from some morbid twist of the mind in the direction of despairing futility, the natural resilience of the vital principle at the bottom of our being.

Not to be dead yet, not to be quite dead yet, is our ultimate human cause of self-congratulatory satisfaction. The irrevocable blow has fallen upon someone near and dear to us, is at this moment falling upon many of our human brothers and sisters, but we "*protero pleomen*" we have 'sailed on', still prepared to wrestle with life, still prepared to make that fierce 'in-spite-of-all' act of the defiant mind.

Well then, what interests me now is to wonder and

speculate as to what the mental attitude of a person will be three thousand years hence. Will people, under conditions totally beyond our present imagination, when scientific inventions and social adjustments have rendered the life-struggle inconceivably easier than it is to-day still think of their personal happiness as important, still feel "asmeni ek thanatio philcus olessantes etairous" 'glad to have escaped death though they have lost their dear companions'?

Or will they have acquired some totally new mental attitude in which personal 'gladness' has become negligible?

It is hard for me to believe in this latter possibility. It is hard for me to believe that, even after three thousand years of scientific experiments and three thousand years of communistic or anarchistic readjustments, the basic urge of a living personal soul will be different from what it is to-day and what it was in Homer's time. The more intense communal consciousness of our western world at the present hour, combined with the industrial fashion that we name 'mass-production' and combined too with the modern tendency to nationalistic dictatorship is just at present charging our psychic atmosphere with social *against individual life-consciousness*.

But it seems to me that it would be a great psychological blunder to regard the present disintegration of the old stoical cults of the individual mind confronting the Cosmos as something final.

'Everything,' as Heraclitus says, 'flows away,' except the battle of the Everlasting Opposites, and among the warring opposites no battle is more deep-rooted than between the individual and all that hinders his realization.

There is a feeling among us to-day, a feeling that like hypnotic electricity from person to person, that the Universe is totally without purpose, totally without meaning, totally without guidance, totally without reason or justice, or mercy, or pity, and with absolutely no

left—but the hugger-mugger, hurly-burly, ramshackle beauty of litter and chance and chaos, there is no cause why we should take anything seriously, make any effort to philosophize seriously about anything; but every cause why we should drift along recklessly and carelessly, always jesting, always unhappy, always ironically simple and simply ironical, not grandiloquently bitter in the old solemn, Satanic way, but Puckishly indifferent, too indifferent to be anything but humorous and harmless, despairing and well-meaning, addicted to drink, but adverse to crime, and for all our mania for bagatelles really more well-behaved *than the Universe deserves*.

It will be doubtless from this particular kind of airy despair, less witty and more chaotic than the elegant futility before the French Revolution, that our time will receive its especial spiritual stamp among the ages, and there will very likely always be individual souls who will return to this, just as there will always be some who will return to the Middle Ages and some who will return to the Classic world.

But whatever the peculiar value of this age of spiritual futility and de-personalized despair may be, it cannot be regarded as an age from which a philosopher of happiness can draw much help for his technique. He must, however, at least make sure that the chemicals he uses for his mental soap-bubbles contain enough of the authentic rainbow tints of human happiness to survive the critical air of this ambiguous time.

It is interesting to speculate upon a possible History of Human Happiness that would indicate at what particular epochs the individual suffered most and was—apart from famine, pestilence, and war—most unhappy.

I think the Puritan Age, particularly in its effect on women and children, must have been a thousand times more deadly to our natural gladness in 'sailing on, still alive, though we have lost our dear companions', than this age of our own, with its cult of de-personalized futility. It is better to jest under the empty and soulless

Nothingness than to weep and howl under the blood-sucking glare of Jehovah.

And this brings us to the crucial question as to whether it were wise to introduce religion at all into such a basic technique of happiness as ours.

I may be a Stone-Worshipper and you may be an Icon-Worshipper, but for the purposes of this book it will I think be an advantage to pretend, both of us, to be advocates of a dogmatic materialistic atheism. Such a pretence will not be altogether easy; for we are so involved with our own past and with the long past of our race that it is a struggle to free our minds, even yet, from all idea of some intelligent purpose in the universe; but since there are many men and women who *have* thus freed their minds, even though to the rest their freedom may seem a desolate and fanatical laceration, I am anxious to make my present technique such an inclusive system that it can appeal to the most austere rejector of religious drugs.

Well then, as Whitman would say, 'whoever you are', think of yourself as absolutely alone in an unfathomable universe. As to these other selves, these people of your most intimate life, you will have to make them also part and parcel of this blind, purposeless, godless chaos that surrounds you on every side.

And over what, in this terrifying welter of alien things, have you got control? Over one thing alone, over yourself! This is the power of which Socrates made so much, and of which millions of 'superior men' in China still make so much. This is the philosophy underlying that rather tiresome 'cheerio!' attitude of so many average Englishmen.

And after all it is the deepest religious act possible to the soul of man. It is in fact the worship of Life itself, whereof the eternal Litany is:

'Though thou tormentest me, yet will I rejoice in thee!'

But granting we have established this basic point in our technique, granting that we have suggested the wisest procedure in the problem of sex-relationship, the next

step is to suggest the craftiest method of making use of the little daily relaxations and pleasures that intersperse our life's work. Nature comes first among these, and the great point in regard to our interest in Nature is that it should not be confined to her more grandiose and startling phenomena but concentrated upon those aspects of her appearance which are attainable by us all and familiar to us all.

Among these appearances I would put first the traditional Four Elements. These are those mysterious presences that it is better as far as our happiness is concerned to regard, as Spengler says Goethe did, with the *physiognomic eye*, the eye through which they reveal themselves to our senses, rather than with the scientific eye, the eye through which they appear as electronic vibrations.

We ought to be always on the look-out for some sort of living substitutes for that religious awe in the presence of life which our race has cultivated so long. To cut down on the religious sense in the wholesale manner advocated by Lucretius seems a sorry neglect of a natural, if monstrously perverted, instinct. And our attitude to the four great elements, to the earth, to the divine ether, to the sea and all the waters, to the sun and the moon and all the stellar bodies, to the wind and to the rain and the frost and the dew, to the motions of the clouds and the processions of the seasons, to darkness itself as it mingles with the mystery of the two twilights, ought to be an attitude containing all the actual feelings implied in the word 'worship', ought to be, in fact, a real substitute for religion, the only substitute perhaps, except an inspired pity for flesh and blood, that the scepticisms of our age allow us.

And second to this feeling for the primal elements, this response to every aspect of earth and sun and wind and water that filters through to us between the crevices of our practical concerns, I think by far our most important awareness is the indescribable thrill that comes to us from certain chance effects of the spectacle of life.

casual groupings of people and things, not necessarily beautiful at all but giving to our existence a sudden magical heightening.

With this heightening there often comes the strange feeling that we have been stirred by these very things in some other, different life. This may well be an illusion and the thrilling happiness we feel may be simply a stirred-up memory of the experiences of our early years.

But whatever this subtle emotion may be, it is something that 'redeems all sorrows' and brings us a wondrous moment of *recognition*, as if, though pilgrims from far away, we have followed this road before.

But I would like to give a few more concrete details of these evasive feelings that I regard as so important.

One sensation that I always feel to be especially fraught with this emotion is the curious *metallic whiteness* of water just before nightfall. There is something about this particular whiteness that suggests all the mystic recoveries that have ever been, from all the lost battles and all the lost causes that have ever been, in the long procession of men's lives.

Another phenomenon that I always feel stirs up something 'rich and strange' in the depths of our soul is the particular look of any ancient time-worn object that is associated with humanity when caught against a wide-stretching background. This might be a post, or a group of posts for instance washed by water and standing with its long mystic endurance against some receding skyline, or water-line, or horizon-line, that draws our spirit towards the infinite. Of the nature of such an infinite this old worm-eaten object, this old post it may be, comes to partake in an unconscious affinity of congruity; those elements 'that themselves are old' answering to the character of this forlorn Inanimate and for ever summoning it to share their immunity from annihilation.

Another casual sight within the scope of everyone and full of a singular power of stirring the imagination is any fragment of roof-top or wall-coping when you catch it in

the yellow light of the rising or descending sun. Thus transfigured, the mere fact of the thing resting there, in its immobility, with the immense gulfs of air sinking away into illimitable space behind it, evokes, as it lies back upon the calm mystery of dawn or of evening, the feeling that it is the golden threshold of some land of enchantment into which our soul can enter and find a solution of all the paradoxes of life.

There are a thousand other such things in the dreariest neighbourhood; only we cannot catch their secret until we have learned to ask from Nature, not so much beauty or picturesqueness, as a certain poetic *suggestiveness* that can start our mind on a long vista of vague brooding.

Yet another aspect of Nature *where the familiar suddenly becomes unfamiliar*—which is the chief cause of those sudden unaccountable waves of happiness that carry us on such strange voyages towards the receding shores of the land of heart's desire—is the sight of a single wide-stretching branch of a distant tree, that, as we gaze on it, seems to be floating on a mystic sea of air, of air so liquid, so transparent, so far-receding, that it is as if the branch that rests upon it were drawing to itself, out of that immensity, the very secret of life and death. I say 'of life and death', for those who wish to know what real happiness is before they die will do well to make the utmost of that feeling that comes upon us all sometimes, it may be in the presence of the faintest veft of rose-tinged vapour floating in the west when all the rest of the sky is dark, or it may be from some other omen of the way, a feeling as if we were on the very verge of bringing life and death so close to each other that they flow together and mingle, and as if the terror of death, no longer isolated, would in another minute be transmuted into *something else*.

What we feel at these times is more significant than any occasion for our feeling, but it is also something that it is easy enough to discount in our cynical moods.

What it seems to carry with it, this deep recurrent feel-

ing, so closely connected with all manner of transitory effects of light and darkness, is an instinct that life and death are not absolute opposites but are fatally involved with each other; are indeed the double-edged manifestation of some *third thing* beyond the power of our reasoning to conceive.

At the bottom of all lasting happiness is an accumulative reservoir of these particular moments and their value is proved by the fact that when we recall any long epoch of our past the worries and discomforts sink quite out of sight, and certain floating impressions of an evasive sensuous character remain, as if they were the essence of all those years! And they *are* the essence of those years and of all the years of our life, and if there is any planetary memory in our ancient earth, storing up, long after we are dead, what we have felt, these moments will be the abiding essence of that too, our individual contribution to the tellurian consciousness! The thing to do is to use your will to force the passing moment to become a medium for the eternal.

Never compare the present with the past. Never anticipate the future. Pull yourself up the second you begin pitying yourself for being *here* rather than *there*.

Too much has been made of hope. The better a philosopher you are the less will you hope. To hope is the most unphilosophical of all mental acts, for it implies that you are failing in the supreme achievement of turning the present into the eternal.

'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.' To the devil with it then!

And instead of calling up imaginary changes in your life or hoping for this or that, the moment you have any time for awareness, the second you are able to look round you and take stock of things, make a resolute effort to convert what you see, be it the dreariest collection of objects, into what has *some* poetic significance. The great thing is cultivate the power of obliterating what displeases you among these objects and of *making it invisible*, and

then of concentrating on what has some kind of a remote appeal to your imagination, if not to your senses.

Force these objects round you, however alien, to yield to your defiant resolve to assert yourself through them and against them. Get hold of the moment by the throat. Do not submit to the weakness of waiting for a change. *Create a change* by calling up the spiritual force from the depths of your being. This is an attitude of mind that you can turn into an automatic habit by doing it again and again. Rape the moment as it passes. It can never pass again; and for all you know its very drabness may prove a loophole into the eternal if you press against it hard enough.

Never wait for the future; never regret the past; make the present serve as past and future together. And if the moment is one of complete misery, lift up your head still, as even the wicked Macbeth had the heart to do, and say to yourself, 'Though Birnam Wood *be* come to Dunsinane and *thou* opposed——'

But suppose you are watching the raindrops on your window, or the straight line of a roof against a grey sky, or a wavering column of ascending smoke, or the edge of a dark cloud tinged with fire, or a seagrain patched with green seaweed, or rooks following a plough, the pleasure you can get from these simple things is not entirely simple, as you force yourself to isolate and enjoy their poetic significance. For with this moment of your feeling there mingles the feeling of all your fathers before you, they who in their day and hour looked at the same things.

It is true that what, in the past of all your progenitors' lives, you are fusing with the pressure of your immediate present is no definite thing, no series of definite things. It is only a vague sense that the feeling of life which you are now experiencing in this moment of detachment from your activity is rich with the memories of all the generations behind you.

The streams of all our lives' consciousness run with

a double flow, the salt water of action and the fresh water of contemplation, and no man's days are complete without an awareness of both. Fortunate is the man who, when he is at rest for a single second, indoors or out, in the course of his day's experience possesses the power of sinking back, back and away from the pressure of his immediate concern, and of gazing calmly at whatever surrounds him, however grotesque and unappealing it may be, and of saying to himself, 'Well! Here am I, a living consciousness still, and there is *that*; and by simply looking at *that* and isolating myself with *that*, and using *that* as the temporary, casual, accidental, incongruous *surrounding of my undefeated spirit*, I lift that with me, for this single unassailable moment, into another dimension, lift it with me, for all its grotesqueness, and set it among the eternal things in the memory of the cosmic consciousness!'

This momentary sinking away from the whole world of action into a complete relaxation of body and mind, and into an hypnotic stare upon any little object within sight, can become, when you set to work to cultivate it, not only an important act of awareness of the deeper life-flow, but a most comforting and healing refreshment.

For its essence is both philosophical and non-moral and because of its absolute detachment from all practical concerns it is wholly irresponsible. In that 'eternal moment' the self in you faces the not-self, making use of any little inanimate thing near you as a symbol of the whole universe.

Immersed in a thousand absorbing activities of work and play we tend to forget the continuity of our inner consciousness of life; we tend to forget our absolute and *accumulative* loneliness. These 'eternal moments' of lying back upon the soul and of letting ourselves become nothing but pure awareness, nothing but a conscious mind face-to-face with any fragment of the inanimate that happens to be near us, are moments which, if we want to be happy and to live long, we ought to snatch from the

flowing of time. Snatch them in buses, in waiting-rooms, in railway-trains, on park-seats, in hallways, in the entrances of hotels and theatres, in public lavatories, on ferry-boats, in taxis, in carriers' carts, in churches, on your bed, on a chair, in your kitchen, on the steps of your house, over the fence of your garden, snatch them whenever and wherever you can!

The essence of these moments is that you sink down for a perceptible breathing-space into absolute irresponsibility.

This is the only way to be increasingly happy, and the only way to save our nerves from being worn out. Infants have this power, and very old people have it, and we are throwing away the Nectar of Life when we refuse in the heat of the day, to reproduce the beginning of its beginning and its end.

You will find it advisable to conceal from your friends these daily immersions into the Sacred Firm of irresponsibility. Nothing is more irritating to a companion all agitated and wrought up over some temporary trouble or some threatening crisis, than to catch you thus floating at ease, detached in this deep underflow of the world, but if you refuse to cultivate this divine secret, you are your happiness in life!

What you really do in these moments of temporary irresponsibility is not only deliberately to assert the blessed privilege of infancy and old age, but also to return to some vegetation-epoch of the past and to anticipate some god-like condition of the future. The realization of any real happiness has much more to do with what is absurdly called a person's *humour*, *mood*, *temperament*, than with the great crises of his *destiny*. For all these phrases such as work-a-day, *business*, *responsibility*, *obligation*, ordinary, dull, monotonous, are words invented by silly and frivolous weaklings.

Life is life; and it is the business of the individual to be happy in *life itself*, not to *repine* *against* *destiny*.

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ouches' from Fate, and gala-days from Chance, and high festivals from Destiny.

But the great trick is to make it your deepest religion and your starkest morality to force yourself to be happy and to concentrate yourself on growing steadily happier. The whole secret lies in this continuity of stoical habit and if you aim at it constantly you will find that you begin to take a grim satisfaction in the harsh occasions when your philosophy is put to the test.

And when the important question arises how far you are wise, in regard to your permanent happiness, to sacrifice pleasure to culture, it is this necessity of continuity and growth that has to be specially considered. The best way is to compromise. There are certain universal pleasures like going to the Movies, like reading the daily papers, or absorbing yourself in melodramatic fiction, that are so sweet and delicious to our common human nature that it would seem absurd to give them up.

But it is a still greater mistake to have no other relaxation-string or contemplative-string to the bow of our happiness than these popular distractions.

What everyone needs is some irresponsible undertaking that is at once capable of infinite development and has nothing to do with our regular life's work or with public success in the world. Some substitute for what we English call a 'Hobby' is what *all* human beings require. 'Untouchable' in Calcutta, a beggar in Benares, a gay in New York, a composer of fiction for the mob in London, a retired gentleman in Dorset, an emancipated Harem-Queen in Istanbul, we all, if we are to enjoy *continuity of happiness*, must hit upon some queer personal enterprise, if it be only watching dung-beetles learning Latin, or collecting fossils, or playing the harp, or making patchwork quilts, or cutting the sticks or studying botany, or adding to our ancestral and legends, the mere thought of which, when wakened in the morning, gives us that peculiar glow which

love-affair or a person's private secret play-passion is able to evoke.

The whole art of happiness is rooted and grounded in two things, *in will-power and in routine*. If I annoy you by saying this you must remember that I am talking about the 'art' of this thing. Some airy-winged waftures of voyaging happiness come to us all, independent of any philosophical methods, but what this book is concerned with is technique alone, technique whether moral or immoral, whether hard or easy.

All happiness depends on a *certain quantity of something and no more*; and it is to limit ourselves to this 'certain quantity'—and not to go on indulging in the thing till it smells like a blown-out candle in a chilly dawn—that we have to use our will.

If you have a mania for cigarettes, for instance, you ought always to postpone your 'next' till you have read so much, or written so much, or walked so far, or looked at the clock for so long. You are deliberately murdering the enchanted Houris of sensual delight that live in cigarette-smoke when you let yourself smoke as much as you feel inclined without any sort of restraint. And every time you put off your 'next' the least little longer you are increasing not only your pleasure in smoking but your happiness in life.

A person who smokes *sans cesse* reduces himself to the level of a person who doesn't smoke at all; indeed he becomes like those who take warmth and food and shelter *for granted*, which is a blasphemy against your whole life upon earth, and is the chief reason why the rich man finds it so hard to enter the 'kingdom'.

But returning to the crucial question of *pleasure versus culture*, as I hinted above, the best thing to do is to compromise. To give up the absorbed delight that a man takes in his daily paper and that a woman takes in her story book because there exist vistas of more intellectual satisfaction in other things seems a self-denying ordinance that goes too far. It is better to think deep 'asides'

while we read superficialities, than to think superficial 'asides' while we read profundities! It is what goes on in the mind that matters.

There is no better example of the solemn hypocrisy of most of us men than the grave manner in which we read our newspaper, furtively revelling in the murders and the advertisements, but assuming the air of so many Mr. Gladstones pondering over high affairs of State. So hypnotic is our moral gravity that we have got it firmly established that a man reading his paper is a sacred sight in the eyes of God, whereas a woman reading her novel is quite a different matter.

But sacred or frivolous, pious or impious, these heavenly oases of irresponsibility when we lose ourselves in the honeyed anonymity of 'A Person Reading', ought not to be rejected. These divine interludes are like Blessed Interments to our tired bodies, like Heavenly Requiems to our fevered souls. We rest, we forget, and for a while are happy.

An epicure in newspaper-reading naturally fights shy of evening papers unless he has no time to read the morning one; and, except out of consideration for those who sell them, it seems as if to purchase the morning's news at midnight were like assisting at a ghastly premature birth.

As far as his solid happiness goes I think that a passion for fiction-reading, so good for a girl, is bad for a young man. A young man's neurotic detachment from Reality makes fiction for him—unless it be attended by an intellectual effort—a perilous and disintegrating drug; whereas for a girl whose life is already more immersed in Reality than her nerves can bear, the reading of fiction is a legitimate escape into that inner world of reverie and brooding fancy which ought, *all her life long*, to be the under-tide of her soul's existence.

A young man is already so much in himself 'a work of fiction' that if he gets a mania for second-rate or third-rate novels he will lose what power he already possesses

for polishing up his weapons of attack and defence in his struggle with life.

But thrice-blessed are these writers of fiction, first-rate as well as fifth-rate, that can so ensorcerize a woman that for a while she can forget this accursed Reality to which every fibre in her being so fatally responds!

There is nothing in Nature, except swallows dipping into a stream, so eminently harmonious as the sight of a woman lost in a book; and the best thing every girl can possibly do for her happiness in life is to acquire as soon as possible, and indulge to the limit, a passion for fiction-reading.

Such fiction can never corrupt her taste or hurt her culture, because in the pedantic, æsthetic, and philosophical sense she does not give herself up to it or 'take it hard' as a man would do. I do not mean that she tosses the 'style' and the 'philosophy' aside, as she would toss aside the supererogatory portions of a man's conversation, for she has no philosophical conceit, rendering her supercilious to her author's musings; but what really concerns her are the characters and the plot, and upon these—and with some justification—she concentrates, and lets the rest go by.

The truth is that women are so much more porous to what you might call *unofficial culture* than men that it does not hurt them to read things that cannot be called classical; nor does such reading hinder the growth of their originality.

But with men it is totally different. When 'successful' men begin, as they often do—and it is a sure sign of the peculiar degeneracy that comes from 'success'—to read the worthless trash that alone amuses them, and to be supercilious to any poor devil they catch trying to improve his mind, what they are doing is displaying a dangerous contempt for that 'good of the intellect' without which, according to Dante, our end must be Hell.

When a successful man relaxes his enterprisingness over a detective-story he resembles a /

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ely pre-occupied in catching lice; whereas when a d-working woman snatches a moment to absorb herself a second-rate romance it is as if she were indulging some restorative, fecund, vegetative process, like that a cow chewing the cud. However this may be, there is no doubt that our daily appiness is immeasurably heightened by the undertaking of some intellectual task totally disassociated from our work. The advantage for instance to be got from the slow acquiring of a foreign language, and the gradual mastery, be it of only *one* single favourite classic, is of incalculable value.

But for this sort of thing it is imperative that a person should choose a really great book, a book saturated with the essential tragedy and comedy of things, the same thousands of years ago as to-day.

And at this point it is worth pausing to note that the books which permanently add to a person's mellowest wisdom are not the startling intellectual works that bring us a new and exciting 'aperçu' upon life, but the old humanistic works that carry with them the sort of massive, simple, epicurean stoicism that reduces to a few large noble outlines the chaotic pell-mell of our existence.

It certainly does not require any exceptionable linguistic aptitude to make use of a laconic phrase such as 'æquam memento rebus in arduis servare mentem' when your worries thicken about you; and verses like these—sublime commonplaces of good sense—are not the for having been mixed with the ups and downs of life for a few thousand years.

how we arrive at the crucial problem of the effort of the over-tones and under-tones of our life, of daily work.

days must of necessity be in a large part and the spirit in which we carry through your counts for more than the nature of relative.

The most miserably incom-

human being can derive a certain degree of satisfaction from an uncongenial job, if he accepts it without too much self-pity and makes the utmost of every little advance in efficiency he can compass.

The best mental trick is to think of jobs that are worse than our own, rather than of those that are more agreeable; and if our job is really the worst possible to us and devoid of the least grain of compensation, there still remains our dogged reserve of will-power to keep us going till the accursed hours have come to an end.

We can, so to speak, shut our eyes and harden our heart till the moment arrives for release. 'Be the day weary, be the day long, at length it ringeth to even-song'; and the Devil himself must be in it if, when our daily release comes, we cannot relax our senses in a paradisiac felicity, quite unknown to the lucky workers whose jobs have *some* dregs of interest! Many victims of this sort, because of their resentment at what our economic system has done to them, naturally turn communist.

The Communistic Credo seems to have something of that psychic power of objectifying personal sufferings in an outward historic movement that the worship of a God of Suffering was wont in former times to possess, but the average man who is at the end of his tether is as a rule more prone to 'eat his own heart', as Homer says, in solitary despair, than to sink his individual wretchedness in either the religion of the proletariat or that of the Man of Sorrows.

It does indeed remain a sardonic commentary upon the social arrangements of our mortal life that into so many hearts the iron has sunk so deep that for a writer to discuss happiness at all seems a ghastly joke.

With regard to this joke Christ still has something to say, and Communism still has something to say, while an honest philosopher—like Marcus Aurelius in his imperial seat at the Gladiatorial Circus—when he beholds certain things can only hold his tongue.

There is such an experience, however, as being *shamed*

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to happiness, shamed out of one's silly manias, shamed out of one's fastidiousness, shamed out of one's querulousness, by the thought of what some human creatures, no less sensitive than oneself, have to endure. This is no complacent satisfaction, at being more lucky; it is the acquiring of what might be called a *tragic sense of proportion*.

But I must approach now a very ticklish part of my subject. Our power of enduring life without breaking down is made a more formidable thing when we throw into it a little of the 'bad' in us as well as of the 'good'.

And the reason for this goes deep. Our evolutionary growth, through unthinkable ages, into the sensitized ego we now are, has implied all the way down the centuries a desperate struggle between the self and the not-self. Into this struggle the endless semi-conscious 'selves' of the lower organisms flung their whole life-force, a force including much of what to our further developed moral sense appears 'bad'.

And into this reservoir of 'bad', into this 'Old Adam' as the Bible calls it, of our lonely *fighting-for-our-own-hand*, it is necessary to lower our spiritual buckets now and again, cautiously so and reservedly so, but still shamelessly and boldly, if we are to nourish our happiness up to its natural sustenance.

That is the whole point. By reason of some mysterious urge from the mystery behind Nature we are developed in pain and grief, a conscience so sensitive and with easily perverted—that it takes very little to turn it into an intermittent torment destroying all chance of happiness.

I do not mean that we must be violent or ruthlessly greedy or cruel in order to be happy; but the elements of the 'bad' in us that we have got to make use of, if we are anxious not to slip into nervous misery.

It is a curious thing, for instance, that men at first feel more spirit and courage to deal with the sh

discomforts of life when they are stirred by erotic lust. And this leads me to a further and a more subtle point. What we call sadism is one of the worst forms of evil in the world and any actual practice of it is an abominable crime; and yet I am almost tempted to suggest that the only way in which the First Cause manages to endure the spectacle of the universe is by means of a certain modicum of what you might call *diffused sadism*. Our 'diffused sadism', as we face the bloodstained arena of life, can afford to be much more diluted with pity than that of the First Cause; but it does remain that there is a certain battle-lust, a certain Mars-and-Venus mood of sublimated erotic energy, that gives us courage to face the jungle of the World without being rendered too unhappy. To call up this mood, as far as men are concerned—and I dare say in the case of women too—it is necessary to deliberately make the most of our natural sensuality and of our natural attraction to the opposite sex. It seems ridiculous to leave to the bold bad unscrupulous people all the old reckless love-making spirit that has so often made timorous souls brave.

Let 'men of good will' exploit at least enough of this dare-devilry of the 'bad' to get what you might call the recklessness of Nature on their side. Nietzsche goes too far with his 'blond-beast' talk; but an ounce of the sexual urge makes us braver than the 'logoi' of many sages.

Yes, if we are honest with ourselves we must admit that there is no escape from the necessity of being deliberately, consciously, and wilfully 'bad' as well as 'good'.

We must leave to saints and to the few real Christians left, the desperate privilege of aiming only at being good.

And there is something else necessary too, and whether you regard this as good or bad will depend on your particular philosophy. We must, if we are to have any secure happiness in this world, and this cannot be emphasized often enough, for all depends on it, realize what might be our cosmic loneliness in Time and Space. We habitually think of ourselves as complete strange

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earth, strangers who have been flung into life and
e been given a father and mother and brothers and
ers and a mate and children and boy-friends and girl-
nds, but *strangers* from the beginning to the end.

And if on the strength of this ultimate feeling of lone-
ness we can manage to cultivate the power of looking
t our daily companions, at our mate, at our parent, at
our child, at our brother, or sister, and of saying to our-
self, 'So you are the Image, you are the Mask, that I have
been catapulted against from out of the infinite Unknown!'
it will be better for them and for us too. For in this way
by the obliteration of superficial grievances, we shall fe
a great wave of pity surging up within us—'you too', we
shall think, 'you *other* strangers from the Unknown, you
too are "pestered in this pinfold here".'

And since both of us are what they call *landed*, let us
be as decent to each other as we can and for as long as
we can!

I don't think men who are unhappy in their life with
their women suffer anything like the misery that women
do who are unhappy with their men, but I think an un-
married girl living with her parents is the creature who
suffers most from *fellow-creatures* in the whole world.

These sufferings—the sufferings of the unmarried
daughter—are far worse in England than in America
in fact they are so cruel that if this impious little book had
the effect of helping any young woman in England to
dure her life with her parents it would completely justify
its existence.

What a pity that Shakespeare did not live to write
sequel to *King Lear* in which some noble daughter
Edgar or Albany were hounded to death in a trag
tempt to rebel against her righteous father!

It is far more difficult in these days, though it is
in America than in England, for a girl to assert
against her mother, than against her father, b
external Revolutions in History imply less spirit

g and tearing and emotional bloodshed than are buried in these intimate insurrections.

I expect one cause of unhappiness in the lives of all of us are those tremendous commandments, in both the Old and the New Testament, commanding us to love without ceasing. When you think of the pitiful and lamentable attempts young people have made to love perfectly, you realize that any honest Handbook of Hygiene must strike its operating knife to the heart of any religious doctrine.

What a liberating flood of planetary happiness ploughs through us when we experience that great moment of Conversion, turning us from love to peace! It is then that we realize that we can be free and happy and beautiful and pitiful and kind and yet not have to love anybody.

The great thing is to sink so deep into your individual loneliness that you can look at every single person in your life and say to yourself, 'Oh, so that's you, is it? Well, you didn't ask to be born any more than I asked to be born. Let us, therefore, be indulgent and kinder to each other to the limit; and as for that Starlight and Nothingness that they call love—'

Certainly we owe an incalculable debt to Freud and his followers in ridding us of the false notion of the Christian idea that sensual pleasure is sinful. But this does not mean that we need spend the rest of our erotic life by accepting all the Freudian suggestions. Human beings suffer so miserably, both in their active and in their passive moments, because of this transitional period—God knows it is a *transitional* period—between the happy half-consciousness of childhood and the full self-consciousness of the *adult* period.

In this transitional epoch our minds are so confused that we have not trained ourselves to recognize the *resemblance* of which they are conscious. We resemble *conscious* automatists; and this resemblance is the most accursed false philosophy of the age for which we live.

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now just emerging, the bastard philosophy of deterministic determinism, which has so grossly discredited power of the human soul.

For the most incompetent worker at the most mechanical and uninspiring job there is hope of happiness if he can become the master of his thoughts. For all there is no form of work on earth in which an impractical person whose will is set upon the task cannot give some pleasure from some increased facility in what he is doing. Efficient he can probably never be. But his life is relative; and if he improves even a little, that, for him, is a sort of Napoleonic victory.

And, after all, Nature sees no difference, the Universe sees no difference, God if there be a God, sees no difference, between a poor devil doing a little better in his work and Napoleon winning the Battle of Austerlitz. The mind is the mind, the supreme miracle. And the battlefield within the most anonymous non-entity, the battle-field of Mr. Nobody's weakness *versus* Mr. Nobody's will is as important to the Universe, if the Universe cares for anything at all, as the greatest outward event ever recorded.

And when it comes to the matter of happiness in your work, the grand trick is to 'make the fig' at your employer, 'make the fig' at your own advancement, and just enjoy with proud satisfaction your own private victories under the eyes of that great Taskmaster, yourself.

But you must be a wise taskmaster and never forget that you work to live, not live to work. A true philosopher who sets eyes on an overworked shopgirl snatching a moment's release from her job in some romantic novelette will stand in awe before such sacred abstractions and regard the place where she turns those enchanted pages as holy ground. In the presence of such a triumph of the mind over matter he will think in his heart, 'Cult may go hang! This girl is within the gates of Paradise. A story is a story; and in the poorest story there

airy bridges by which a human soul—for all we know an immortal soul—wins a release from Reality.

Potentially all Shakespeare and all Dostoevsky lie like pressed rose-leaves between the pages of the simplest story. The poorest tale that brings release for the imagination and oblivion from responsibility is nearer the secret of the universe, than the pestilent Organization for which we are labouring. *Its* best justification, its only justification, is that it enables a few living sentient minds to be free from care for a few minutes. For what else do all the great economic concerns exist, save to fill the bellies and liberate the spirits of conscious human souls?

Eulogists of efficiency as if it were an end in itself, psychologists of success, as if success could bring happiness, are the false prophets of an age that has lost the true values. There is only one 'successful' person in the world and that is the person who in spite of appalling afflictions remains unconquered in the depths of his soul. A tramp who possesses his soul in unshaken peace is a nobler product of this mysterious universe than a querulous philosopher.

When I said that if we were to grow steadily happier as we got older we must acquire some particular ritualistic awareness in our enjoyment of food, what I meant was not so much our natural enjoyment of palatable food, as a particular and special satisfaction in certain very simple symbolic foods, such as rolls and coffee, or bread and tea. Influenced by Walter Pater I have at various times made much of the 'sacramental' aspect of these simpler ways of satisfying our hunger; but what I mean in this connection is something rather different from this.

What I feel is that our secret struggle to get our life under control and to retain an undefeated spirit requires some sort of symbolic milestones along the difficult way. Religion, with its diurnal introspections and its constant tapping of a supernatural reservoir of support, afforded this kind of mental Log-Book; but for our present pur-

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since faith in these things has slipped away, some *ritual* becomes necessary, some simple substitute religion that we can use as a rallying point in our struggle with our melancholy.

What better secular 'Introibo ad altare' could we find than the traditional one of 'breaking bread'? To this may be added the act of bending over a fire, and the moment, more inevitable still, when we put out our light and turn over on our pillow.

It seems strange that so few of us, considering the difficult and tragic hours we all have to endure, are content to drift on in so huggler-mugger and casual a fashion refusing to make the least attempt to give an interior continuity to our days. Over external events we have slight control, but it seems a pity that what is within our power, a conscious continuity of some sort of philosophical life, should so often never even have been attempted when we come to die.

The point I am trying to make is that although pleasurable feelings at any given moment may be denied us, there is that which no evil situation can altogether prevent, namely our power of resistance, and of watching *ourselves resist*.

And, even while we are suffering, there is a mysterious force in the mere fact that our mind is still detached from our suffering, and watching our resistance to it. Now although at the moment there may be no gleam of happiness in our grim detachment from what we are undergoing, the mind will discover later that its capacity for happiness under difficulties has been mysteriously increased. Any trial less acute than the one we have resisted without a gleam of happiness it will be now in our power to resist with an unmistakable glow of mental satisfaction.

And we are led on from this to the real doctrine of Epicurus—a doctrine considerably different from the *negative element* associated with his name—namely that the *negative element* in any wise happiness is more important than the positive element.

so frivolous they can be villainously troublesome. You may take it as an absolute rule that no man or woman of character ever uses the word 'bored', nor do I care to meditate on the fate of these enemies of happiness when they reach Dante's *Inferno*. 'Non ragionam di lor: riguarda e passa!' is the best comment on their destiny.

Boredom? In this tragic battle for happiness, upon which we are all engaged, there is not much leisure for that! The thing to do when you begin to feel overpowered by your worries is to say to yourself 'Damn it! I'm still alive; and *some* I love are still alive. Hell! What then?' And having said this the next thing to do is fling your spirit against the pricks. I do not mean by this against the images that torment you. I mean against the particular material objects that *surround* you. If you are within four walls, fling your spirit against the iron of the grate, against the iron of the stove, against the hard angles and opaque surfaces of the furniture! If you are in the open, fling your spirit against the rough edges of masonry, against the trunks of trees, against rocks and stones and hedges, against the blind wind and the empty air! Do not wait for the shapes and the chemistry of these Inanimates around you to grow beautiful or attractive. Fling your spirit *against the pricks*! Fling it against the heedless elements, against the indifferent walls. This very gesture of the soul in its desperation is a sort of *momentary suicide* and the relief and release you will get from it is indescribable. It is a kind of daylight turning of your face to the wall. It is a momentary death. Death, death, death. These five letters of our alphabet are a great weight in some people's lives.

The best way to dissolve their evil-smelling smoke when it does trouble you is to contemplate steadily the only two alternatives. Either you are totally annihilated, which is only carrying on indefinitely what often happens to you when you fall asleep; or you start fresh in another dimension the fate of all mortality and are not confronting any weird or unique exception to the system of things.

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the negative art of forgetting our trials than of the positive art of adding to our felicity we can best cope with these devils. Nature and our Senses see to it that the moment *worry* is removed 'the pleasure which there is in life itself' begins to flow through us again. Not quite unimpeded though! For there is still another ghastly Enemy of happiness that sometimes takes the opportunity of lifting up its horrible featureless face when the magic of life is trying to stir again—I refer to that feeling of abysmal futility, as if nothing in life were interesting or exciting, from which young people especially so often suffer. This feeling of cosmic futility—which frequently has a sexual origin—is a totally different thing from what is known as 'boredom'. A feeling of universal futility is a philosophical weakness, the infirmity of a noble mind, whereas to boast that you are 'bored' is to betray the silly superciliousness of a fool and a snob.

Polite persons feel instructive aversion when they hear certain foul-mouthed Anglo-Saxon words—such as that familiar one which boys delight to inscribe on walls, but which the discreet editors of the great Oxford Dictionary have thought best to exclude from the English language—but the utterance from human lips of the words 'Boring, Boredom, Bored' is a far more unworthy piece of blasphemy upon life upon this mad Hurly-Burly that contains things so obscene, things so loathsome, things so unspeakably horrible, things so touched with infinite beauty, things so riddled with infinite disgust, things so radiant, things so transfigured, things with such livid roots going down to hell, things with such flaming wing-points scoring heaven, than any use of the worst monosyllabic rigidity that Lady Chatterley's lover in his virtuous dream might feel would do his mistress good!

The people whose supercilious mouths seem moved to utter the word 'bored' resemble that absurd General, in the Dorrit family, with her 'prunes and p

Such victims of Boredom are the flea-bite enemies of their own and of other people's happiness, and alt

so frivolous they can be villainously troublesome. You may take it as an absolute rule that no man or woman of character ever uses the word 'bored', nor do I care to meditate on the fate of these enemies of happiness when they reach Dante's Inferno. 'Non ragionam di lor: riguarda e passa!' is the best comment on their destiny.

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There are plenty of people who, save for the physical risk of dying, would prefer to be dead than live; and while there are life-lovers to whom this is the worse that can happen, their very interest in life keeps death in its place.

But the best way is to struggle to get it *both* ways, and to cultivate all our days a certain power Nature gives us of sinking so deep below the superficial distractions that we really taste something of 'the pleasure which there is in life and death'.

But it is Worry and Futility, not death, that are the two worst enemies of our peace; and whether we are actively working, or passively resting, or even trying to enjoy ourselves, these two devilish *Phorkyads* are always at it, scrabbling to reach the chamber of our secret delight and dig their filthy witch-nails into its heart.

And how best can this everlasting worrying over little things, alternating with this sickening sense that the whole plot of our life is futile and its whole a failure, be circumvented and undermined?

By sinking down—oh, such a little way down!—below the bitter salt tide of circumstance, into the deep fresh flowing of the life-and-death flood.

This is the secret. Once get lodged in your head that there will be worries of *some* kind—not your present ones perhaps, but others no less distracting—to the end of your days; once get lodged in your head that whatever worldly successes you may have that old sense of Futility will forever be there in the background—for it is the other-side-of-the-Moon in every mind, and is co-existent with consciousness itself, with the consciousness of the gods, there *are* gods—and you will come to see how absurd it is to go on day after day, year after year, never realising that the tremendous drama of your being a living soul at all in this great Mystery-Play is the thing to wonder at.

You worry over these things because you take the tremendous grandeur and the dark sublimity of existence

granted. You are digestion-conscious, and money-conscious and vanity-conscious; but you refuse to be Life-Conscious.

You are always aiming at the wrong thing—you aim at getting rid of worry by worrying, and at getting rid of the futility-sense by plunging into more futility; whereas if you got into the habit of imagining yourself actually dead—as at any second you may be—you will acquire that secret irresponsibility which is the diving-board of all living joy.

The thing to do is to imagine yourself suddenly flung into life from some unthinkable distance, jerked up into life from some unthinkable Limbo. You look round, you take stock of your surroundings, of your situation. What is the worst that could happen to you? Simply to be back whence you came again!

But you will say, 'It is life I suffer from, not death.' No, no, it is not life that hurts you so. It is the *events* of life. It is your refusal to see the wood for the trees! Small blame to you for wishing you were dead when you are the victim of an interminable procession of devastating details. But these details are not life. The death you desire is much more like life than they are. In fact in comparison with these things it is a part of life, the eternal *other side* of life.

What we all need, what if we possess any imagination at all we can all get, is the grand release and escape of plunging into *death-in-life*. If you were really dead these things would not be so important. Your loved ones would either die too, or they would somehow survive and struggle on. When your ailment returns, when the rent-collector knocks, when your self-esteem is outraged, when your headache begins again, when your day's work has been a failure, *kill yourself*. It is the best thing you can do. Kill yourself in your imagination! And then when you are dead and the coffee, or the tea, is put on the table—even if it is unpaid for—you will have the privilege of

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denly coming to life and doing so with a deep sigh of content.

It is incredible what a number of escapes and rescues and refuges really lie between the most miserable of us and the actual bread-line.

Here sit you, here sit your companions. You have been lunging into this scene from Nothingness; and, after a succession of such scenes, it won't be the bread-line or the poor-house—in all probability—but the same Nothingness that will await you again. The curious thing is that it is not the extremely poor, living from hand to mouth, who suffer most from worry and futility, but we of the bourgeois class, who have so many refuges and barriers around us.

What are called practical people—and dumb idiots they mostly are—have a way of assuring us that if we worked a little harder we shouldn't have time to worry. Yes, and we shouldn't have time to live either! The Lord deliver us from the oracles of practical people!

The thing to do is to pause often in your work and think and imagine, and say to yourself, 'Well, it will soon be over, and I shall be sipping my tea, and stretching my legs, and thanking fate I am not yet in the poor-house.'

A wise man or a wise woman is the person who, if work is tiring—and all work, including what Homer calls 'the work of love', grows tiring sometimes—calls to mind the few really relaxed moments that fate allows, the cup of tea, the cup of coffee, the glass of beer, the seat by the fire, the bench in the sun, and above all the incredible relief of pulling the sheet under the chin when the head sinks on the pillow. For, when you really think of it, moments in all our lives when, in the midst of our work we suddenly get one of those unaccountable thrills of happiness that seem to arise for no reason at all—the moments that make life worth living.

Well, if these good moments for all our wily tricks are so rare, their best substitute, and this is our power, are these conscious anticipations of

from toil, when we sip our coffee or tea, and smoke in peace, or finally pull the bedclothes over us and invoke the honey-sweet embrace of the younger sister of death.

I do not mean that in acquiring the trick of dealing with our worries by sinking into that larger aspect of things which underlies their turbulent surface we should cease to take practical measures to cope with these difficulties. I mean that even *while we are dealing with them*, even while we are tinkering at them and plotting and planning to get them under control, it is good to remember that at the worst our life will 'go', as the negroes say, 'inching along' somehow, and the world will not come to an end.

Take what practical measures you can; but always keep in touch, underneath each pre-occupation, with that detached ether of absolute irresponsibility which is the element of real life and real death. This, it is true, is much easier for a man than a woman; but on the other hand a woman's pre-occupation with any particular worry ought to be so modified by her being so much more involved than he is with *the whole field of worry* that this especial thing does not tower up, out of all proportion, as in the man's imagination it tends to do.

One class of worries ought summarily to be dealt with by a drastic gesture of the mind. I refer to the good opinion of others.

It is one of the worst curses of a certain type of sensitive nature, with a mania for being liked and respected, that it should always be brooding, like the luckless Macbeth, upon the 'golden opinions' of other people. But those who suffer from this must make one crushing, rending, violent motion of the mind and force themselves to face the rough, jagged bed-rock reality, namely that we are all absolutely alone, and that the only ultimate censor of one's behaviour is oneself. There is an important further fact in this connection, namely that our friends are much less concerned with us, whether for good or ill,

be escaped by that sort of absolute flight that resembles death, I mean the absolute obliteration from our mind of what it is madness to remember; but with regard to this Demon of Futility, though no two victims of it will use the same weapons, one desperate mode of attack, if we have enough vitality to make it, is to draw in upon ourselves from our immediate surroundings, gather our spirits together, like a crouching animal about to spring, and then, like the animal when it *does* spring, to plunge with a spiritual leap forward, into the vast rondure of the Cosmos about us. Our body meanwhile, in its world-weariness, remains absolutely immobile. But our spirit, 'Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,' plunges into the hard resistant curves and angles and planes and cubic-substances, into the colours, bright or drab, garish or dingy, that surround you, into the very bodies and faces of the people who surround us, into the atmosphere that overhangs it all into the opaque body of the earth that underprops it all, and, on, on, through these, and beyond these, into the receding hollowness and unthinkable emptiness of interstellar space!

But our own plunge into the cosmos must not stop here. Arrived at the ultimate black gulf between the stellar systems we will suddenly find ourselves at the mental limit of that *false infinity*, that mathematical infinity composed of circles and boundlessness, which is the circumference and the No-Man's-Land of our particular life-dimension. Here we have reached the very Viper's throat of the *rational insanity* that is at the heart of our futility-torment.

You are now at the boundary of human thought, at the point where human consciousness cannot go further *without cracking*. You have reached this point without a movement of your body. You have reached it through all obstacles, through the walls that shut you in if you are indoors, through the air that surrounds you if you are out of doors.

And now what do you find? You find that there is

nourished by the mind, it is what rises, like breath in a frosty air, from the mind's wrestling with its fate. We are not born to be happy. We are born to struggle for happiness. We are born because of pleasure, but we are born in pain. We are surrounded by pain, and we are lucky if our end is painless. But deep within us is a sacred fount, from whose channel, by a resolute habit of the will, we can clear away the litter that obstructs the water of life. Not in what we possess, not in what we achieve, not in the opinion of others, not in hope, not in admiration, not in love, not in anything below or above the sun, is the secret of happiness to be found. It is only to be found in ourselves.

The essential nature of it who can tell? Some possess it whose lives appear as one long tragedy to others; and many lack it who have in appearance everything to bring it into being.

There are those whose lives are full of moments of distracting pleasure who have never been and never will be happy.

And there are failures, derelicts, fools, abjects, simpletons, paupers, weaklings, dolts, from whose souls do what Society can, do what the Universe can, there flows, in spite of everything, this undented and undefeated spring!

It is a great mystery; but of this we may be sure there is none born of woman without the foundation of the divine element in his being. The only creature in the world will directed resolutely to its evolution or its annihilation.

We can all love, we can all hate, we can all grieve, we can all pity ourselves, we can all condemn ourselves, we can all admire ourselves, we can all be selfish, we can all be unselfish. But below these things there is something else. There is a deep strange, unaccountable response within us to the mystery of life and the mystery of death, and this response subsides below grief and pain and loss and disappointment, below all loss and all misery.

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And the startling thing about this response is, that it is independent of love, independent of pleasure, independent of hope, and can continue, as long as we remain true to ourselves, in spite of all reason, to the end of our days.

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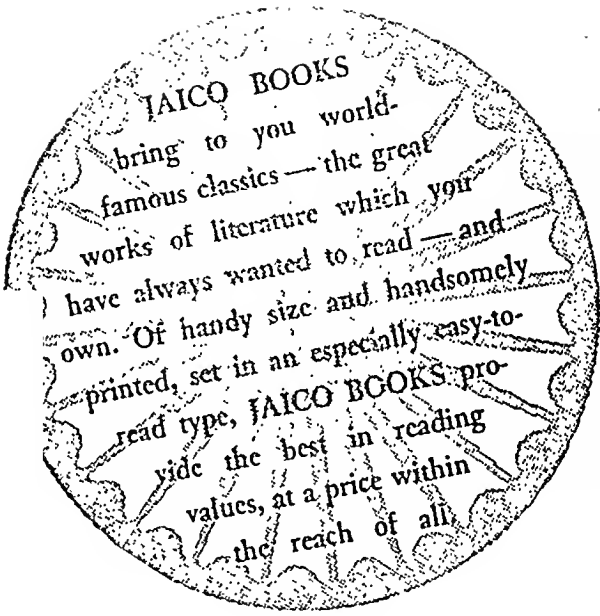
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